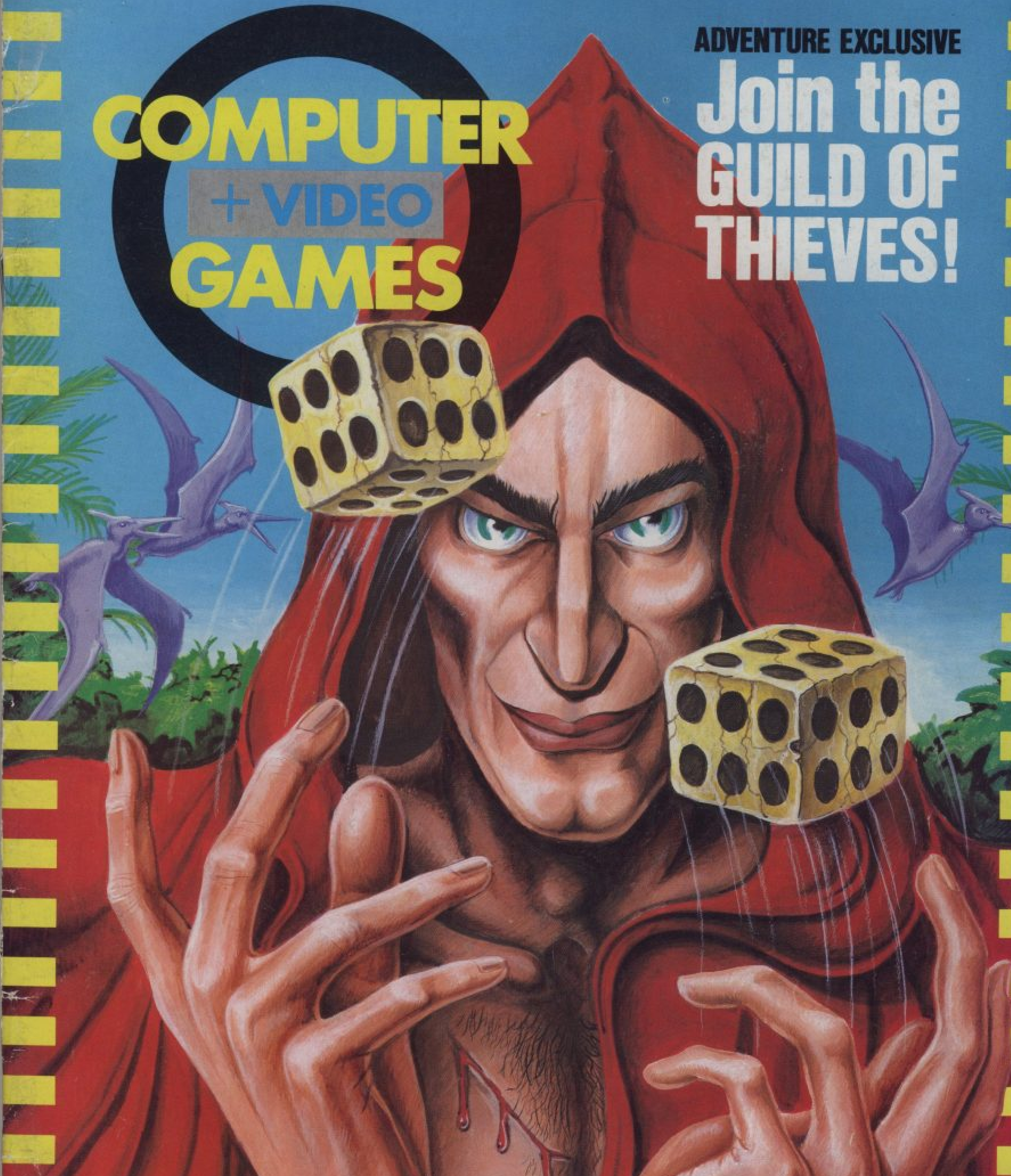
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Fly high with Eagles from Hewson, collect Monty Mole tokens, check out the Mystery of Arkhen Manor, drool over the new Amigas.

13 REVIEWS THIS ISSUE:

Arkenoid gets the C+VG Game of the Month Award. C+VG Hits go to Auf Wiedersehen, Monty, Head Over Heels and RanaRama to name but three.



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INSIDE STORY

The heat is on! This month's C+VG is hot property. It's a wonder the pages aren't signed. We've laid down the law and captured an exclusive on **Guild of Thieves,** the latest from *Magnetic Scrolls* and *Rainbird*. Seeing is believing. But you probably won't believe your eyes! Ace programmer **Steve Turner** has also written an exclusive players guide to his froggy smath for *Hewson,* **RanaRama.** You'll be caught on the hop without it. The exclusives keep on coming. There's *Palace's* **Stifflips** and *Melbourne House's* **Shadows of Mordor,** the follow-up to *Lord of the Rings.* We've also negotiated money off details from Golden Joystick winner that'll save you a smal fortune. And don't miss our **Grange Hill, Robico** and **Mastertronic Milk Race** competitions. And due to public demand we've also just a fraction of the goodies in this issue. Miss it at your peril.

Tim



GRANGE HILL COMP/58



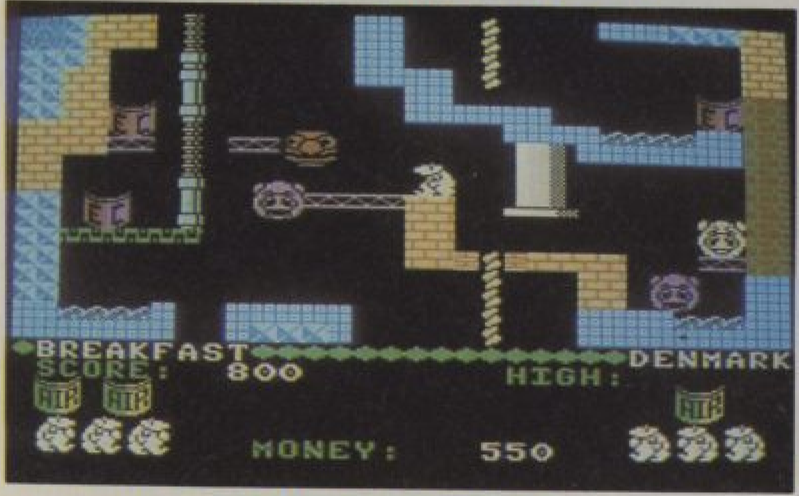


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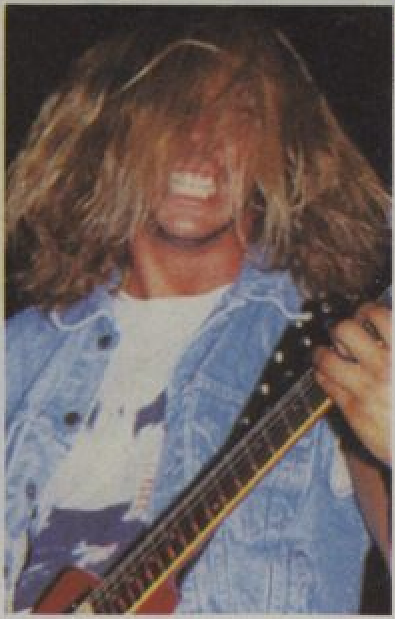


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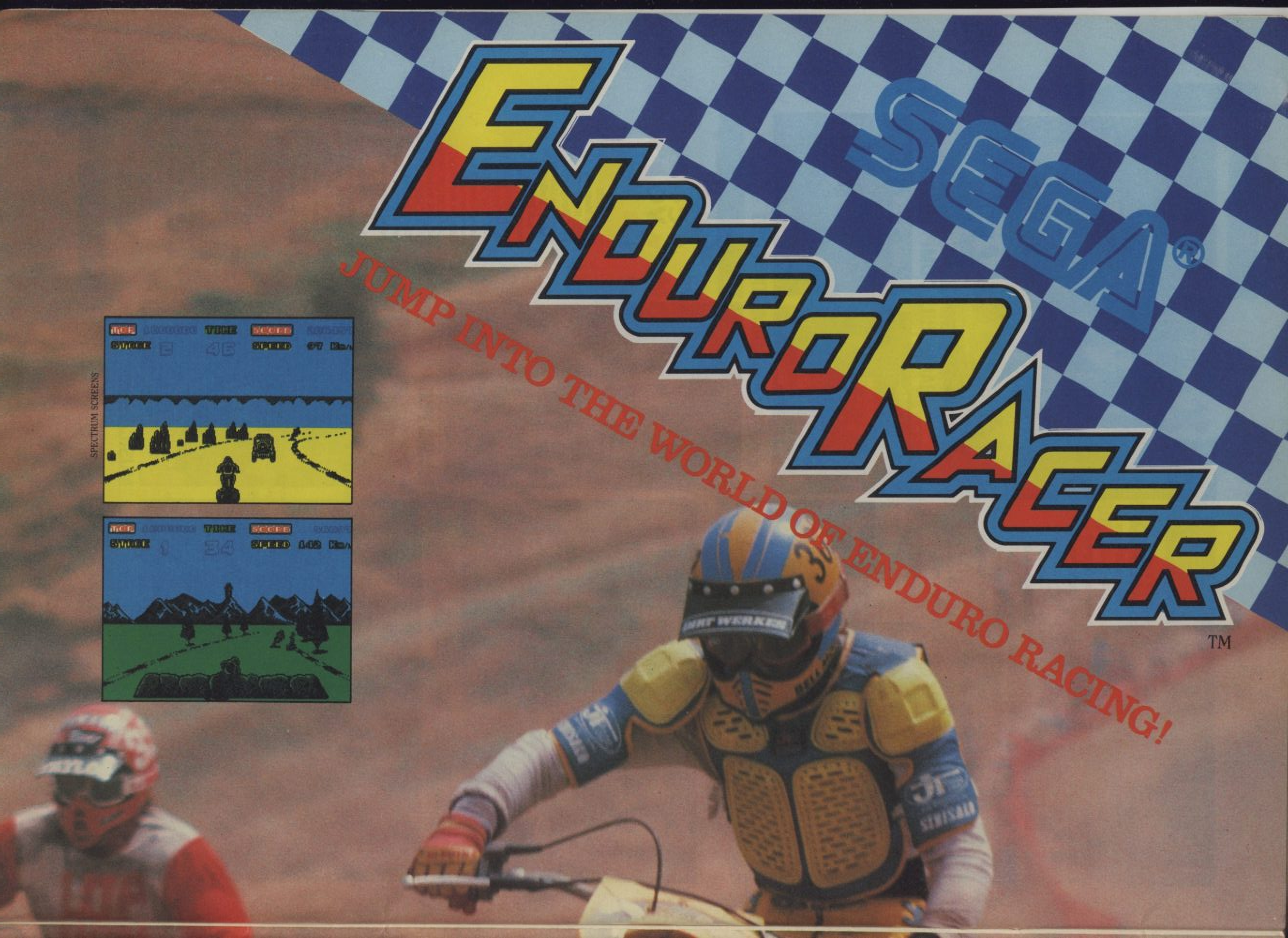


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News

■ Melbourne House is hoping to cast a spell over arcade adventurers with the **Wiz**, set in the mythical land of Midgard and Niflheim.

The programmer is **Simon Price**, who with **Mike Lewis**, created the comic strip adventures **Redhawk** and **Kwah!**



Midgard is a world populated almost entirely by magicians, sorcerers and wizards, of varying degrees. You start life as a level one apprentice magician, whose ambition it is to attain the lofty status of fifth level King Wizard.

Armed only with an empty spell book, you must inscribe within it the incantations you buy from wiser wizards, and travel the land seeking the runic ingredients which are necessary for your rites. Such spells can shield you with invisibility, transmute your opponents, and slay behemoths and necromancers.

Running parallel to Midgard, sideways in time, lies Niflheim, a land of darkness and gloom, its denizens are monstrous, misshapen and grotesque.

As you progress through the five levels of Midgard and Niflheim, gaining in experience, and filling the pages of your grimoire, forethought and strategy is vital. You must continually decide which spells to buy, when to use them, who to trade with and who to kill.

Wiz will be available on Spectrum and Commodore 64 disc and cassette in June. Spectrum £7.95, C64 cassette £9.95 and disc £14.95.

■ Danish software house **Kele Line** releases two Commodore 64 titles this month, **Thunder Force** and **Unitrax**.

Thunder Force is set in 2050 where two crimefighters have been taken prisoner in a Camp for the Lawless. They must break out and save the world from corruption. The price is as yet unknown.

Unitrax is space shoot 'em up where earth is under attack and you must blow up the reactors on the invading ship holds to defeat them. Price 95p.

Other Kele Line titles scheduled are **The 4th Dimension**, **Vikings** and **Pirates of the Ocean**.

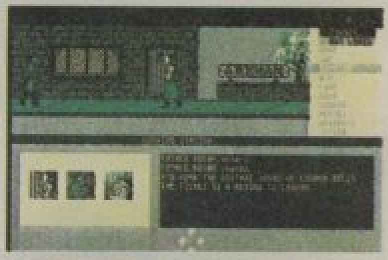
■ The town of Arkam is a sleepy backwater where nothing ever happens. So when the editor of a national newspaper receives a letter from Colonel Fortescue, a former War Cabinet Member saying something is terribly wrong in the village, he sends a reporter to investigate. **The Mystery of Arkham Manor.**

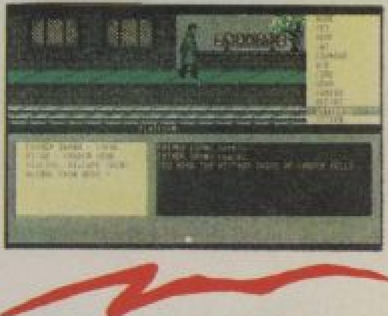
The mystery deepens when the reporter finds that the Colonel has vanished, leaving his house locked and the curtains drawn.

As you explore the village of Arkham and question its inhabitants, the adventure unfolds with Animated graphics, combined with text, icons and pull-down menus. The program includes some remarkable features to help your investigations and recreate the experience of being a 1902s news-hound.

You must send regular telegrams to your editor, reporting your progress, and write articles to appear in the paper. To enable you to do this there are notebook and photograph facilities, with which you can record salient facts and take pictures of suspects and locations.

The Mystery of Arkham Manor will be available in May 1987 for the Commodore 64 priced at £9.95 and Spectrum and Amstrad at £8.95.





■ **Auf Wiedersehen Monty** is the latest in **Gremlin Graphic's** games following the adventures of Monty Mole. You should see Monty clawing his way up to the top of the charts very soon.

So how would you ike to get your hands on the copy of the game for £2 less than you would pay in the shops? Of course you would.

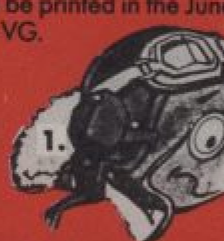
Well, thanks to Gremlin, that's what you can do in this Computer+Video Games coupon collection offer.

Printed below is a special Monty Molehead Token. Next month we will print another one. When you have both heads you can send off to Gremlin for your copy of Auf Wiedersehen Monty for £2 off.

The game will sell in the shops for the following: £7.99 Spectrum and MSX, £9.99 Commodore and Amstrad. But with this exclusive C+VG/ Gremlin offer you can get the games for £5,.99 and £7.99.

Send your cheques or postal orders together with the two heads to Gremlin Graphics, Mail Order, Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4SF. Make sure the cheques are payable to Gremlin and NOT C+VG and specify which computer you own.

Don't forget the second head will be printed in the June issue of C+VG.







■ **XOR**, the maze game for the BBC launched by **Logotron** in January, has been licensed by **Atari** for the 520ST and 1040ST.

Atari has also taken an option with the intention of launching the **XOR** maze generator software which it will market as an **XOR** construction set.

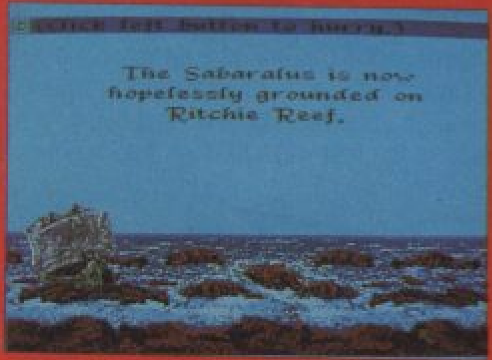
XOR is a series of mazes through which the player has to find a way, collecting masks by defeating obstacles and rescuing the masks from the maze. It has 15 levels, each with a solution which involves strategic, chess-like thinking to attack a problem.

■ **Hewson** is set to launch what it hopes to be the sequel to **Uridium** at the end of May. It's called **Eagles** and has been written by Danish programmers













■ Cinemaware does it again — only better! **Sinbad and the Throne of the Falcon** is a truly humorous and entertaining game writes **Marshal M. Rosenthal.**

The Caliph has been transformed into a falcon and the Black Prince Camaral is in the midst of a bid to overthrow the Caliph and attain ultimate power.

Into this chaos, comes Sinbad. There is much to do. You must steer your ship, the Sabaralus, about the oceans and seek out clues and aid in the many regions of the world.

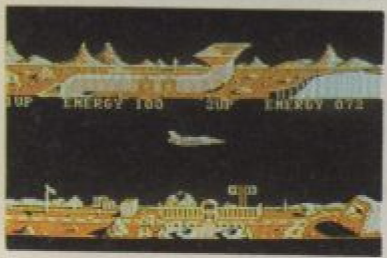
Sinbad requires a quick mind, strategy, and a heck of a good joystick. Arcade-oriented sections including battling human and inhuman foes as well as sailing through treacherous waters.

Sinbad and the Throne of the Falcom comes from **Cinemaware** for various systems including the XE/ST and the Commodore 64/Amiga.

Poer Maden and **Bo Nielsen.**

Eagles will be out on the Commodore 64, price £8.95 on cassette and £12.95 on disk.





■ **Alligata** is set to release three **Double fun** packages on its **Budgie** label at £4.99. Each pack contains two games.

The titles are **Rocket Roger** and **Blagger**, **Guardian** and **Eagle Empire** and **Hyper Circuit** and **Killer Watt.**

Also coming up on the Budgie label at £1.99 is **Table Football**.

■ Look out for something different from **Addictive Games** within the next few months — an adventure game. At the moment the Spectrum game is called **Raddish — Secret Agent** , that may change.

■ **Don Priestley** is at work on a new **Trap Door** game for **Piranha**, due for release in the autumn to coincide with a new series of the popular animated television series.

But before that Piranha will release another Priestley game, **Flunky**, apparently set in Buckingham Palace where strange creatures lurk in the cellars and corridors and rooms.

Playing the part of the Flunky, you must first apply for a job at the Palace. The first of the problems you encounter is how to get into Buck House's employment office.

Once in and dressed in full Flunky attire, the head of the household's staff will set various problems such as lighting fires throughout the Palace. On your travels through the building there will be some pretty famous people to encounter. HRH and her family will also be setting the Flunky some pretty difficult tasks.

Flunky is set for release in September on the Commodore 64, Amstrad and Spectrum at £9.95.

■ If you've brought **Martech's Uchi Mata** on the Spectrum check it out closely. It might be slightly duff.

An early preview copy of the game somehow managed to get duplicated in the first production run. You can tell if it's a bad copy if at the end of the game the scores do not return to zero but continue to rise.

If this happens on your copy send it to Martech who will send you a new copy and refund the postage.

A Martech man says: "Our apologies for any inconvenience caused because of this mistake. We can only hope to relieve the situation by sending out new copies as quickly as possible."

Martech's address is Martech House, Bay Terrace, Pevensey Bay, East Sussex BN24 6EE.

■ Dr Livingstone I presume? Presume is the word 'cos these screen shots came with a whole lot of Spanish stuff. Anyway, **Livingstone** is a colourful looking arcade adventure from Spanish software house **Operasoft**, released in this country by **Alligata.** Alligata, explorers, jungle? Quite apt really. Livingstone will be available for the Spectrum, C64, MSX and Amstrad at £8.95 all tape versions, £14.95, Amstrad disc and £9.95 64 disc.





■ Every game released by **Power House** will contain either a free game or audio track.

All the Power House music is provided by the House Electronic Xperience, headed by **Wayne Allen**.

Wayne, formerly of Kick Partners, has appeared many times on TV.

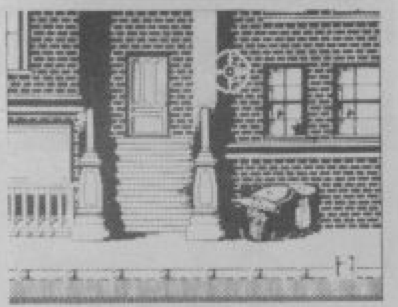
■ **Jon Ritman,** programmer of **Head Over Heels, Batman** and **Matchday**, is at work on a new soccer game. Details are still secret but it's provisionally called **Soccerama.** After that, Jon will start work on **Matchday II.**

News

■ **Silent Service, MicroProse's** World War Two submarine simulation, has been released for the Amiga. Price £24.95.



■ **Infogrammes** departs from its normal style of arcade adventure games with the release in May of **Prohibition**, a gangster shoot 'em up. These shots are from the Amstrad version but the game will also be released on the Atari and Commodore. No details of price are available yet.



■ **Trivial Pursuit Genus Edition** has been released by **Domark** for the IBM PC and compatibles, including the Amstrad 1512 series. It will cost £24.95.

■ This picture of **Domark** duo **Mark Strachan** (blonde) and **Domonic Wheatley** (brunette) is not what it seems. They are not disguised to avoid people who bought **Friday the 13th** but to promote the launch of the **Baby Boomer** edition of the best-selling **Trivial Pursuit**.

It's enough to scare the **Living Daylights** out of you. Which, by chance, happens to be the title of the next James Bond Film. Domark have scooped the rights to a game based on it.

Domark promise the new game will be a lot better than **A View To A Kill**, based on the last Bond epic.

Licensed from the producers of the James Bond films, the game of The Living Daylights follows the plot of the filmand has James Bond, played by **timothy Dalton** for the first time, roving the world in an attempt to save the West from a criminal scheme aimed at world domination.

The game is being produced by several teams of top programmers — one in the USA! Two highly-rated UK programming teams are already hard at work.

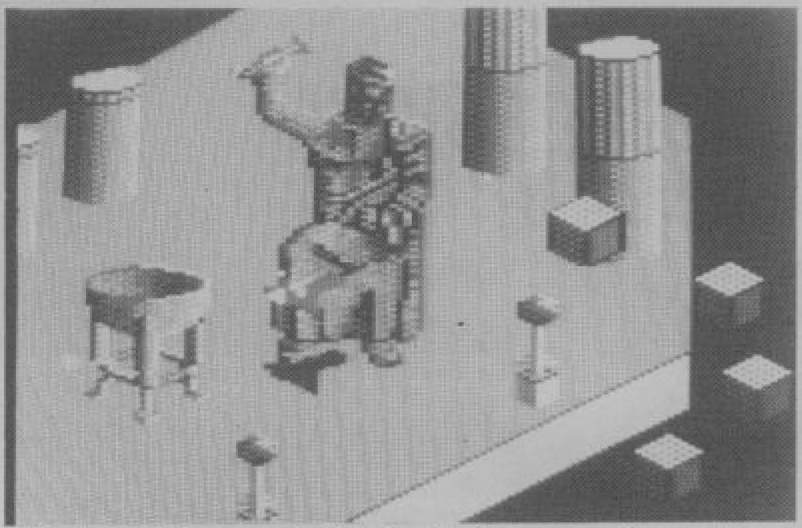
Design Design are working on the Spectrum and Amstrad versions while **De re Software** are coding the Atari 8-bit version. In the USA **Sculptured Software**, of Salt Lake City, are producing the Commodore 64 and Amiga versions.

The game is due for a summer launch, like the film, and will be released in mid-July. The first release will feature Amiga, Atari, Commodore 64, Spectrum 48K and 128K and Amstad CPC versions. Other versions will follow for the BBC/Electron, C16, Amstad PCW, Atari ST and MSX computers.

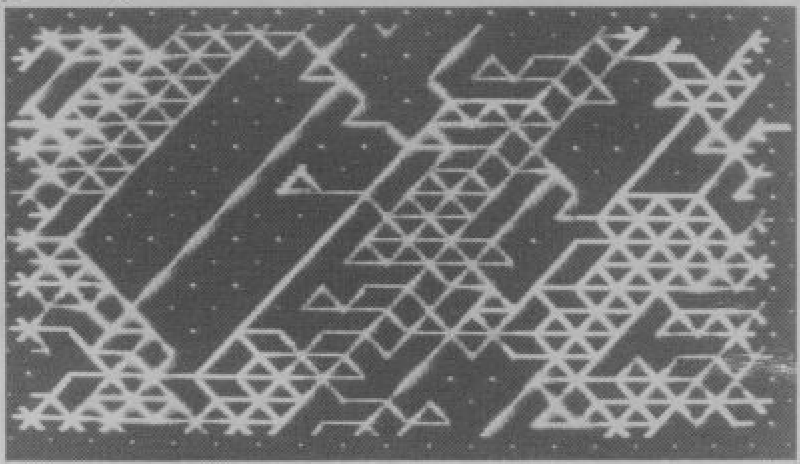


■ **War Game Greats,** the first compilation of SSI strategical simulation games, is to be issued by **US Gold.** Titles included are **Battle for Normandy, Knights of the Desert, Combat Leader, and Tigers in the Snow.** It will be out on the Commodore 64, price £14.99 cassette and £19.99 on disk.

■ **Thalamus** has signed a licencing deal with **Electronic Arts** to distribute **Sanxion** and **Delta** in the United States.



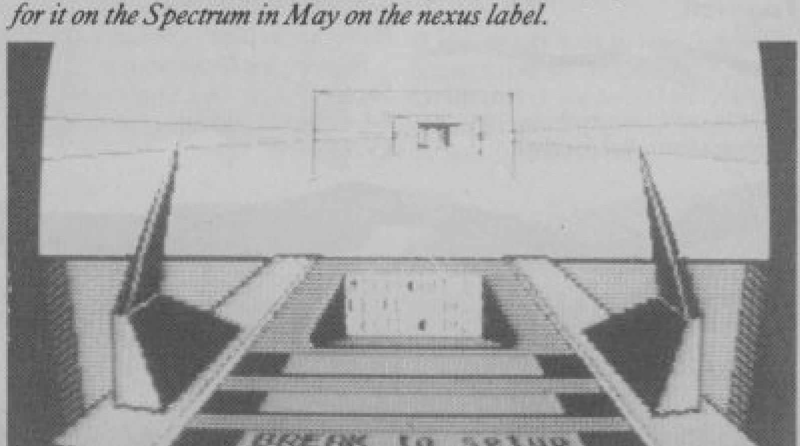
Here's *Leviathan* — a C+VG Hit on the Commodore 64 — on the Amstrad. English Software says the game — which includes three landscapes packed with buildings, missile launchers, and flying problems — is due for release in the first week of May. It will cost £8.95 on cassette and £12.95 on disk.



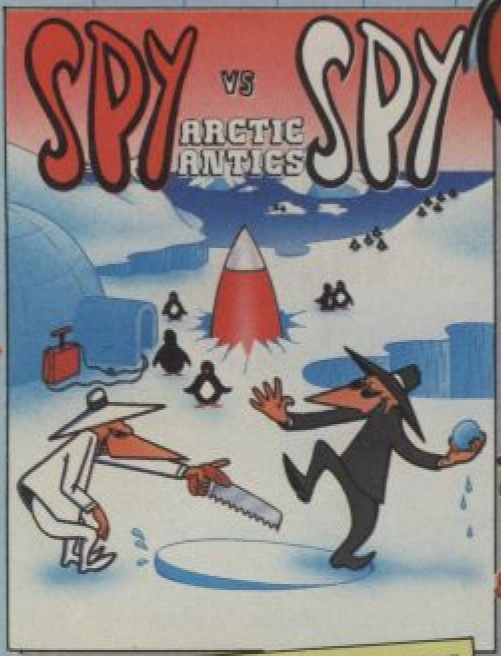
Here's IQ, CRL's new release on its Nu Wave label, due out now. It's being billed as the "artificial intelligence arcade game." In it artificial beings fight each other for territory. These beings must be programmed to fight the computer or other players. It will apprently "test the finest minds." If you fancy having your brains tested, then IQ will cost you £8.95 on cassette and £14.195 disk for the Commodore 64. An Atari version will follow.

Now here's something to watch out for. *Zynapse* — the first game from none other than *Dominic Robinson*, the ace-coder who did such a truly awesome job converting *Uridium* onto the Spectrum. Dominic has teamed up with *John Cumming* to create a game that will appeal to all dedicated zappers everywhere. Escape an alien infested space station, battle through asteroid storms, infiltrate enemy planets and attempt to win the final conflict. *Zynapse*, "a horizontal scrolling epic", will be out in June for the Spectrum, C64 and Amstrad. Keep 'em peeled for this one!

This is **Micronaut One — The Moebius Trip**, *fresh from the baffling brain of ace coder* **Pete Cooke**. *Can Pete match the epic addictiveness of Tau Ceti and Academy with this newie? The answer is, of course, a big affirmative! The plot is fairly simple. You play the part of a droid who inhabits a massive computer. This droids job is to transfer power around the vast brain. But, you guessed it, there are nasty lifeforms building webs and draining energy all over the place. The game is set inside the computers communication tunnels and you race through them — seeing the outside world through your viewscreen. Micronaut looks as if it's going to be very special. Watch for it on the Spectrum in May on the nexus label.*



Databyte presents

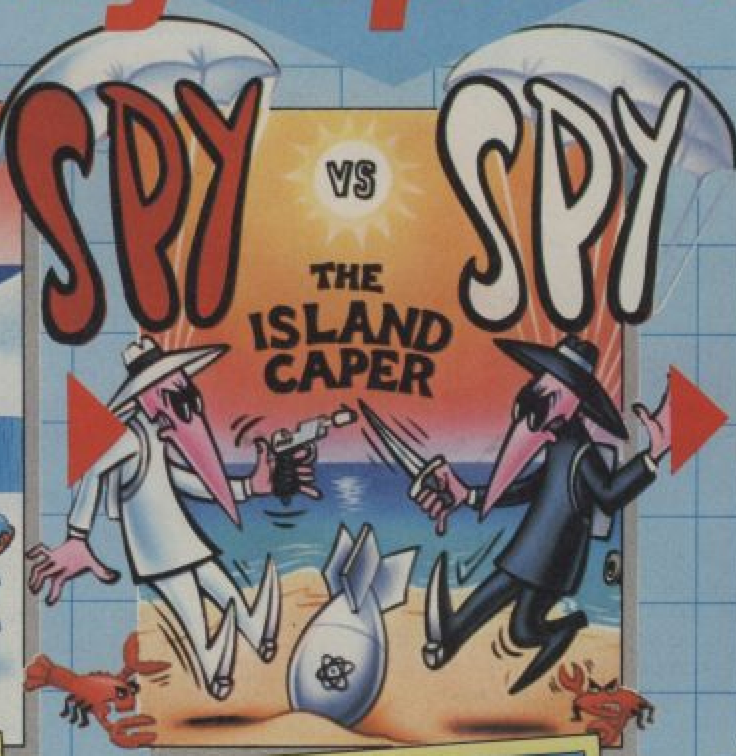


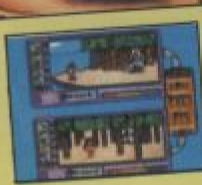


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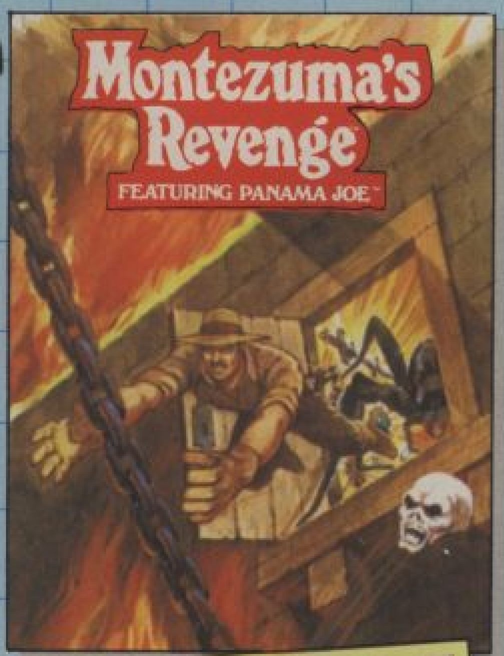
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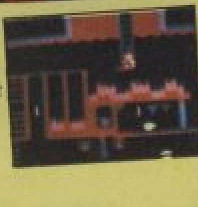




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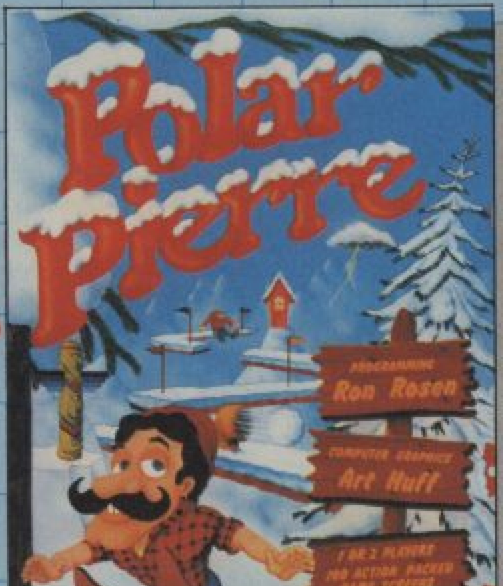




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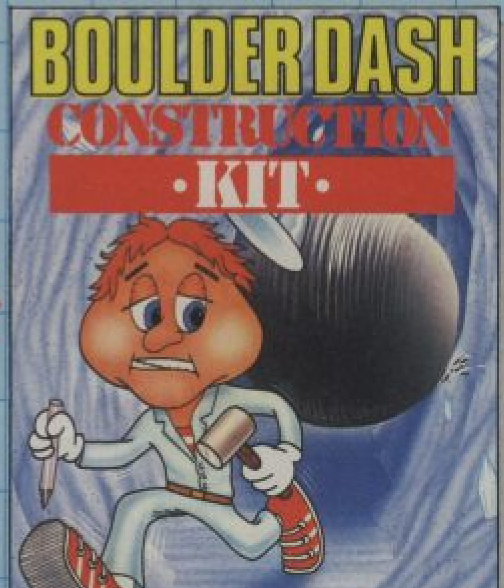




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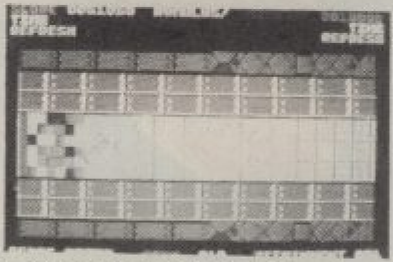
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DATABYTE

News

Christian Urquhart, he of *Decathlon* and *Robot Messiah* frame, has re-emerged at **Hewsons** with a new Speccy-blaster called **Gunrunner**. Claimed to be "one of the most advanced games for the Spectrum to date" **Gunrunner** is set on the ice planet Zero. And you'll need all that ice to stay cool as you set out to save the planet from the attentions of Destrovia, the war world. Your father has left you a detailed map giving a route across the complex plutonium pipe system which will take you to the utilities essential to combat the enemy. Your strength and agility must be at its optimum to overcome the many obstacles in your path. Seek out the jet packs, shields and deadly poisons hidden along the supply route to assist your journey to freedom. **Gunrunner** will be available for the Spectrum at £7.95. Release date, May 20.



■ Hang on to your joysticks all you all action speed freaks. Check our **Romulus** from *Quicksilva* on the Commodore 64. It'll bug you. Welcome to the Ingros transputer plant which is developing problems. You, playing the part of Technician Nick Bradley, have the task of de-bugging it. But watch out. These bugs are apparently intelligent.

The plot sounds really complicated — references to "randomising on the chip generation unit", "T-States" and "Transmition Stages." But when you get down to it it's a matter of piling up the points with some nippy joystick action.

■ **Commodore**'s new **Amiga 500** — billed as "the best home computer at any price" — will sell for £499 plus VAT. But on top of that you'll have to add a minimum of £299 plus VAT for a monitor.

The machine is certainly impressive. C+VG's Hot Gossip ace **Tony Takoushi** declares: "There's nothing to touch this machine."

Commodore see the A500 as the "ultimate upgrade" for people who currently own Commodore 64s, Spectrums and BBCs.

The Amiga A500 offers the Amiga standard Motorola 68000 plus three chip word-processor system with 512K RAM which is internally expandable to one megabyte. As a WIMP system the Amiga A500 comes complete with a mouse.

An in-built 880K 3.5inch floppy drive is included with the opportunity to add two additional drives. It also has PC compatible parallel and serial ports, and Amiga systembus expansion.

Commodore predicts there will be 300 plus software titles available when the machine goes onto sale in the second



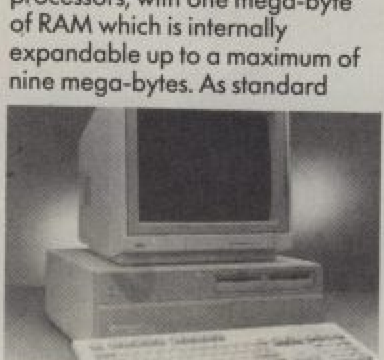
quarter of this year.

Amiga titles already available include **Rainbird's Starglider**, and **Mindscape's Defender of the Crown**.

The Amiga 500 will get its first main public showing at the Commodore show on June 12, 13 and 14.

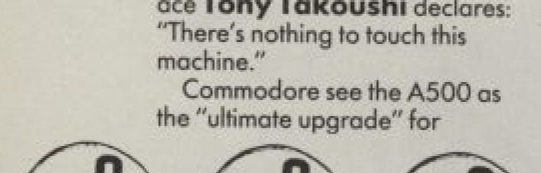
Commodore have also unveiled its news business Amiga, the A2000.

The A2000 is based on the Motorola 68000 running at 7.14 MHz supported by three co-processors, with one mega-byte of RAM which is internally expandable up to a maximum of nine mega-bytes. As standard



there are eight interfaces including serial and parallel ports and an interface for the detachable 94-key business keyboard. A mouse is included in all configurations.

Prices start at £1,095 (ex VAT) for an A2000 with single 3.5 inch 880K floppy drive, one mega-byte of RAM, Keyboard and mouse.



■ You collected the first coupon. Now cut out number two and be the first in your street with a FREE copy of **Super Sunday**, the truly wonderful American Football simulation from **Nexus.** We've got 200 copies of the game to GIVE AWAY to the first C+VG readers to send forth tokens and the coupon below to Nexus, DSB House, 30 High Street, Beckenham, Kent. Get yours in NOW!

C+VG NEXUS SUPER SUNDAY OFFER

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Please rush me my free copy of **Super Sunday.** I enclose TWO C+VG American Football helmets.

■ Remember **Sweevo**? That lovable cartoon hero of **Sweevo's World** the 3D arcade aventure released by **Gargoyle Games** last year. Well he's back and playing it for laughs again in **Hydofool** out soon on the **FTL** label. It's similar in style to *Sweevo's World* but set underwater. And just when you thought it was safe to go down to the beach. . .

■ Who are these gormless looking bunch of computer industry figures caught posing in a very undignified manner hoping to attract some attention? They'll all Virgins, actually. Or more accurately they all work for **Virgin Games.**

The only one we can identify is MD **Nick Alexander.** He's the one in the middle with a football stuffed up his pullover.

The football is a clue to a game, **FA Cup '87**, a revamped version of last year's **FA Cup Football.**

You'd think they would have better things to do with their time.



■ Hoist the main sail! **Pirates** from **MicroProse**, is a swash-buckling simulation set on the high seas.

Players are tested on a wide range of sailing skills, from navigation to battle tactics and preventing a mutiny — timing the broadsides can spell victory or defeat.

First there's a crew to press-gang. Later, plunder ports and hunt for treasure buried by wary townsfolk.

Finding valuables is not the only reward waiting for the daring sea-captain either. Get to know the Governor and there could be romance in the air with his beautiful daughter!

The Governor may grant you some land and a title, to end your days in comfort as a respected nobleman. Then again, the future could see you branded as a common scoundrel.

Pirates, is scheduled for release in the US late May, followed closely by its UK launch and will be available first on disc for the C64, with versions on Apple, IBM and Spectrum planned for later this year.

■ The memory of **Tau Ceti** lingers on at **CRL** with the release of **Traxxion**, a new space shoot 'em up.

Traxxion is a construction site satellite orbiting around Reema — one of the Tau Ceti planets.

After the Tau Ceti wars Traxxion is found to be damaged. You are sent to Traxxion to repair the damage.

Once there, you discover the reactor has started to melt down. You have to act fast and find the exit from the monorail system in your maintenance car in order to get off Traxxion before its inevitable meltdown and destruction. The monorail tracks will provide the player with various obstacles and robotic worker cars will hamper the player's escape and force him to shoot the cars off the tracks.

The price for **Traxxion** is, as yet, undecided. The Commodore version will be released in May with the Spectrum and Amstrad versions following in June.

Meanwhile, **CRL**'s **Wooky and Moty**, two arcade strategy games for the Amstrad, should be out now.

■ **Star Raiders II** — reviewed last month on the Atari — will also be released on the Amstrad, Commodore and Specrum by **Electric Dreams**.

Meanwhile **Bureaucracy**, written by **Douglas Adams**, author of the **Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy**, is due out on the new IBM, Apple II series, Macintosh, Atari ST, CBM 126, Amstrad PCW and Amiga. Price £34.99.

May will see the relase of **Space Quest** by the fantasy role playing specialist **Sierra On Line**, best known for **King's Quest** and **Black Cauldron**.

Atari's Supersprint will be released in September by electric Dreams. The player gets a choice of eight tracks to test their racing and driving skills.

Data East's Firetrap, in which the player must climb burning skyscrapers, extinguishing fires and rescuing people, will be released by Electric Dreams in October.

UFO Robo Dangar, the space **Nichibutsu** space war game which centres on a trasforming warrior, will be released on CBM, and Spectrum.

Prices for games released on the Spectrum, Amstrad and Commodore will be £9.99 and £14.99 on disk.

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Silent Service is an ultra-realistic simulation of submarine warfare. Using superb graphics and sound effects, historical combat missions are accurately recreated. The action is non-stop, the suspense gripping.

Your submarine features all the critical battle stations – the engine room, conning tower and ship's bridge – and has a sophisticated attack plotting system. But, you must live by your wits.

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▶ **C+VG HIT**
Miss the hits at your peril. They are the business!

▶ **THE REVIEWERS**
TIM METCALFE:
The Ed man wields the fastest joystick of all. When his word is heard your better listen.
PAUL BOUGHTON:
Shoots from the lip. Likes zip in his zap.
LEE BRATHWAITE:
Radio Lancashire's ace games man, always ready to air his views.
CHRIS CAIN:
The Amiga man. But Cain is able to be persuaded that 64 isn't near retirement age.
DAVID BISHOP:
As an Amstrad fan, The Bishop preaches what he practices. He is also full of praise for the Atari ST.
STEVE BADSEY:
The Doctor reports from the frontline about war and strategy games.
NICKY TREVETT:
Reclusive Nicky has the knack with the BBC.
Brian Webber:
Sees all, hears all, plays all.
JERRY MUIR:
Games expert Muir has the Atari 8-Bit between his teeth. Something he XLs at.

ARKANOID

- ▶ **MACHINES; SPECTRUM/C64/ AMSTRAD/ATARI ST**
- ▶ **SUPPLIER: IMAGINE**
- ▶ **PRICES: £7.95 (SPEC) £8.95 (C64 AMS) £14.95 (ATARI ST)**
- ▶ **VERSIONS TESTED: SPECTRUM/C64**
- ▶ **REVIEWER: TIM**

Not since *Ikari Warriors* has the C+VG office seen such bloodshed! Yup, we've been fighting over the joystick again — this time just to get to grips with Imagine's instant smash arcade conversion Arkanoid.

Our arcade ace Clare Edgeley raved about the Taito coin-op when it first appeared — and now we're going to rave about the computer conversions.

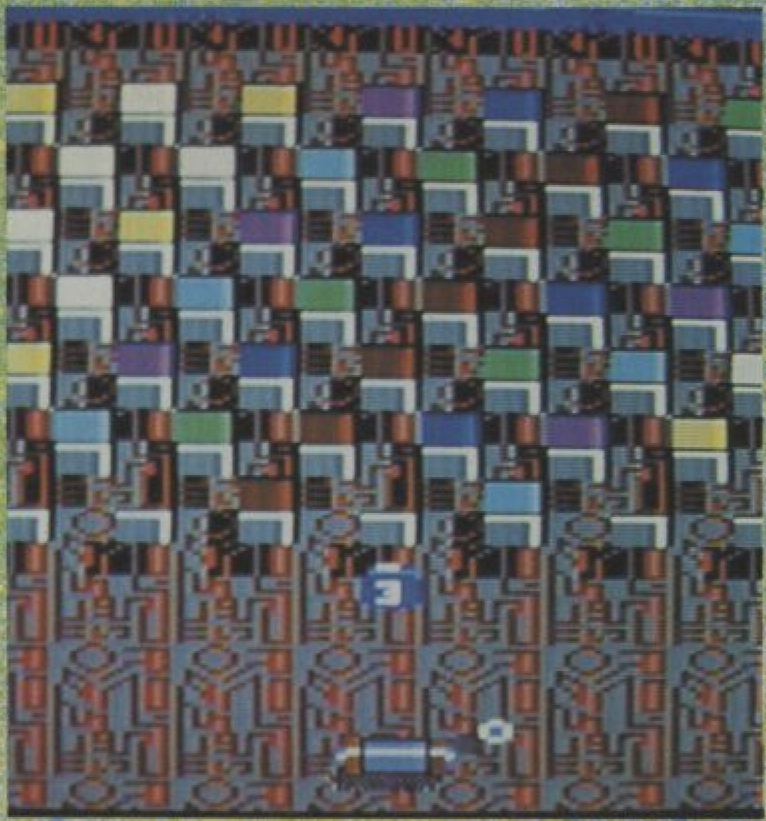
OK, so in all reality *Arkanoid* is a revamped version of *Breakout*, that ancient game which us ancient gameplayers sometimes brush the cobwebs off to relive great moments of gaming history.

Trouble is *Arkanoid* is just awesomely addictive and extremely playable. You're hooked from the moment you load up the game.

So what's it all about? Well, you're in charge of a Vaus craft — sounds like some sort of German rodent — and you're supposed to be trapped in space.

Armed only with an energy bolt you have to break down mysterious barriers preventing your escape. These barriers are built of "bricks". *Breakout* — see!

Anyway you have to blast away at these bricks by using the Vaus craft as a bat — hitting the energy bolt back and forth off the walls. Energy capsules drop down from the wall as you destroy it. Collect these, they are useful items. Each has a





ENDURO RACER

- ▶ **MACHINES: SPECTRUM/C64/ AMSTRAD/ATARI**
- ▶ **SUPPLIER: ACTIVISION**
- ▶ **PRICE: £9.99 (SPECTRUM/C64/ AMSTRAD) £14.99 (ATARI ST) ALL DISCS £14.99**
- ▶ **VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM**
- ▶ **REVIEWER: TIM**

Could this be the best of the current arcade conversions? It certainly comes close. But as we went to press only the Spectrum version was complete so we'll have to reserve judgement on the overall *Enduro* situation.

But the Spectrum version is a blast — as close as this machine can get to the arcade version. All the obstacles are there and even the dips and bumps in the track have been reproduced.

But we're racing ahead a bit here. If you've not come across this epic coin-op you won't know that it's a sort of dirt-bike simulation.

You find yourself in the saddle of a high power enduro machine blasting across desert dirt tracks and rugged forest trails in an effort to become enduro-champ of the universe.

You have to complete each of the five tracks in a certain time — fail and it's back to the starting gate.

The first track is relatively simple — small rocks to avoid and jumps to jump. Timing is all important here. Get your jump wrong and your rider ends up dangling by his handlebars high in the sky. Sometimes you can





codeletter on them which lets you know what they do.
S: Slows down the speed of the energy bolt, making it easier to position yourself.
C: Enables you to catch the bolt, move to the desired position and then fire.
E: Expands the Vaus craft, giving you more chance to deflect the bolt.
D: Disrupts the bolt into three separate components thereby giving you three times the effect.
L: Arms your Vaus with a laser allowing it to shoot bricks and aliens.
B: Breaks the section of the wall enabling your Vaus craft an alternative escape route to slip through to the next level.
P: Awards you an extra life.
On screen displays show your current score, hi-score, number of lives remaining and level attained. Points are awarded between 50 and 120 for knocking out a brick, depending on the colour. Collecting a capsule is 1000 and hitting an alien scores 100 points.

There are six levels of differing complexity. You'll need to work out a good strategy for each screen to succeed — but always be ready to allow for the unexpected incident — that odd bounce etc.

Opinion is divided here — but the 64 'ers among the team rate *Krackout* a nose in front of *Arkanoid* simply because of the joystick response.

	Spec	C64
● GRAPHICS	7	8
● SOUND	7	9
● VALUE	10	10
● PLAYABILITY	10	10

save him — but it's more likely that you'll end up in a tangled heap at the side of the track. If there's time left you can pull yourself together and head for the finish line.

Complete a track within the time limit and you'll get the extra time added on to the next track. Track two is set in the desert and is much more difficult. More rocks, more jumps and maniac jeep drivers to watch out for.

The scrolling is pretty smooth and fast enough to give you thrill! Graphics are effective and a pretty good copy of the arcade original.

A minor moan is that — on the Speccy version — your rider is the same colour as all the others — black. It would've been nice if he had different coloured leathers to make him stand out a bit more.

The game is nicely presented with a good hi-score chart. Nice lap times/percentage of track completed display as the arcade machine features at the end of each game. And there's a two player option as well.

Enduro Racer is the best Activision game for ages. Get it.

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	7
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	9

MARTIANOIDS

There was a time when the arrival of an Ultimate game in the C+VG offices would have created great excitement. The review team would fight among themselves to be first to get the game, load it up and start playing.

But since the awful *Cyberun* was issued last year and the company was swallowed up by US Gold, nothing has been forthcoming from the secretive software house. Rest in Peace, we thought.

Ultimate's past glories have been ripped-off, cloned and re-cycled. There have been countless Ultimate-style games and the formula, although not worn out, is a little jaded. Every now and then someone really comes up with an impressive 3D walkabout game. Take *Head Over Heels* from Ocean. It's in the Ultimate mould but graphically it's brilliant.

Now suddenly there's *Martianoids*. It's arrival created no mass panic, just a passing interest.

It's the much-loved formula but with nothing truly brilliant about it. It could be from anybody.

As always there's just the brief story which sets the scene of the game.

The Markon Empire has launched a vast robot ship into the depths of space on a mission to find new life-forms and gather knowledge. It's called the Markon Dawn.

Controlling this ship is the Brain of Markon, a vast and powerful computer. Your role in *Martianoids* is to be the guardian of the brain, to defend, maintain and activate it in the event of attack.

And that's just what happens. Martianoids, unfriendly aliens, have gained entry to the ship and are now interefering with the passages of programs through the brain. Their weapons are capable of destroying all active components in the brain.

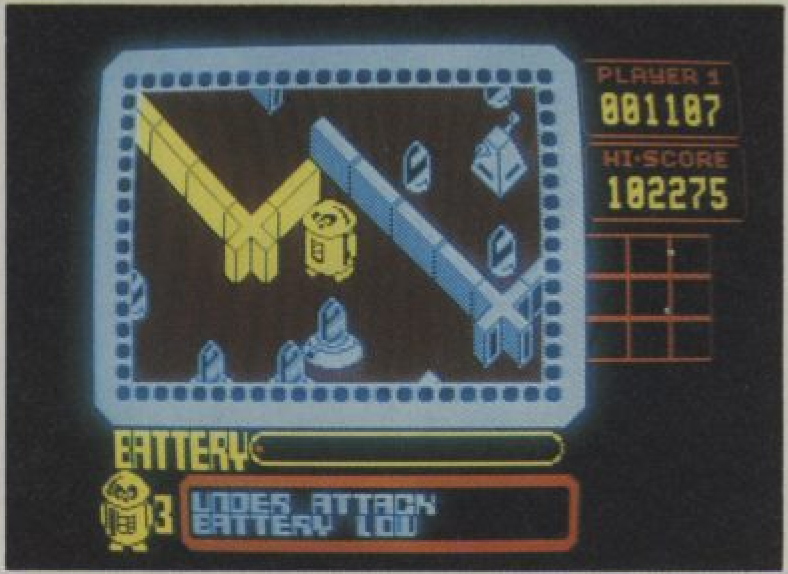
You have to guide the programs from the transmitter to thé receiver in each sector of the brain. There are nine sectors of the ship, shown on a display to the left of the main window on the game. The robot — that's you — appears as a little blip. The program to is another blip. You've got to get to the program and get it into position.

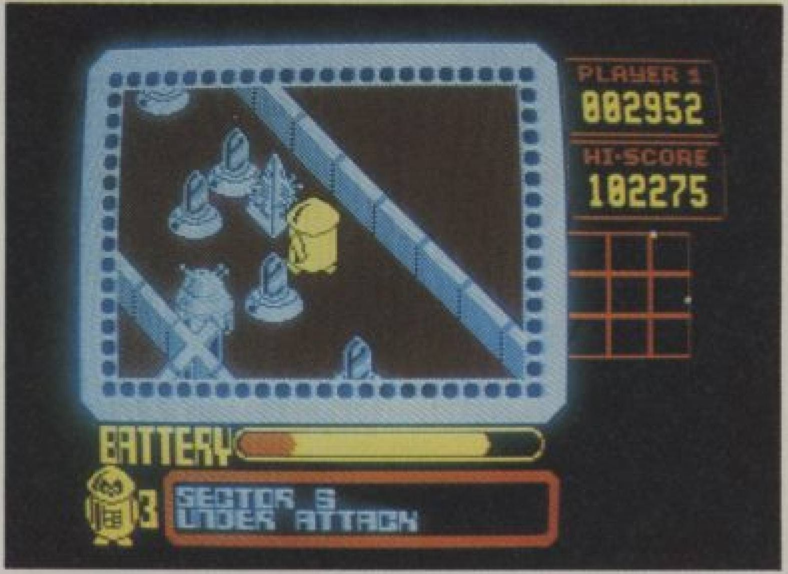
The robot is equipped with a laser with which he can zap the various aliens, who can drain away his energy in suicidal attacks on him. It's also equipped with a blaster to destroy walls.

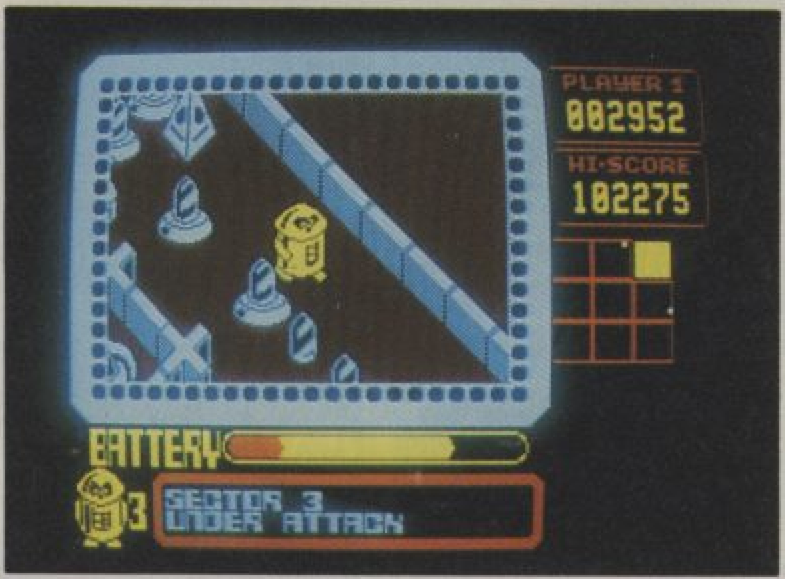
Martianoids is a good game, highly playable, graphically okay but without the touch of originality which marks it out from all the other Ultimate clones.

Still it's nice to see the mystery men back in action but time will tell whether the name Ultimate will regain its former glory and recapture its pioneering spirit.

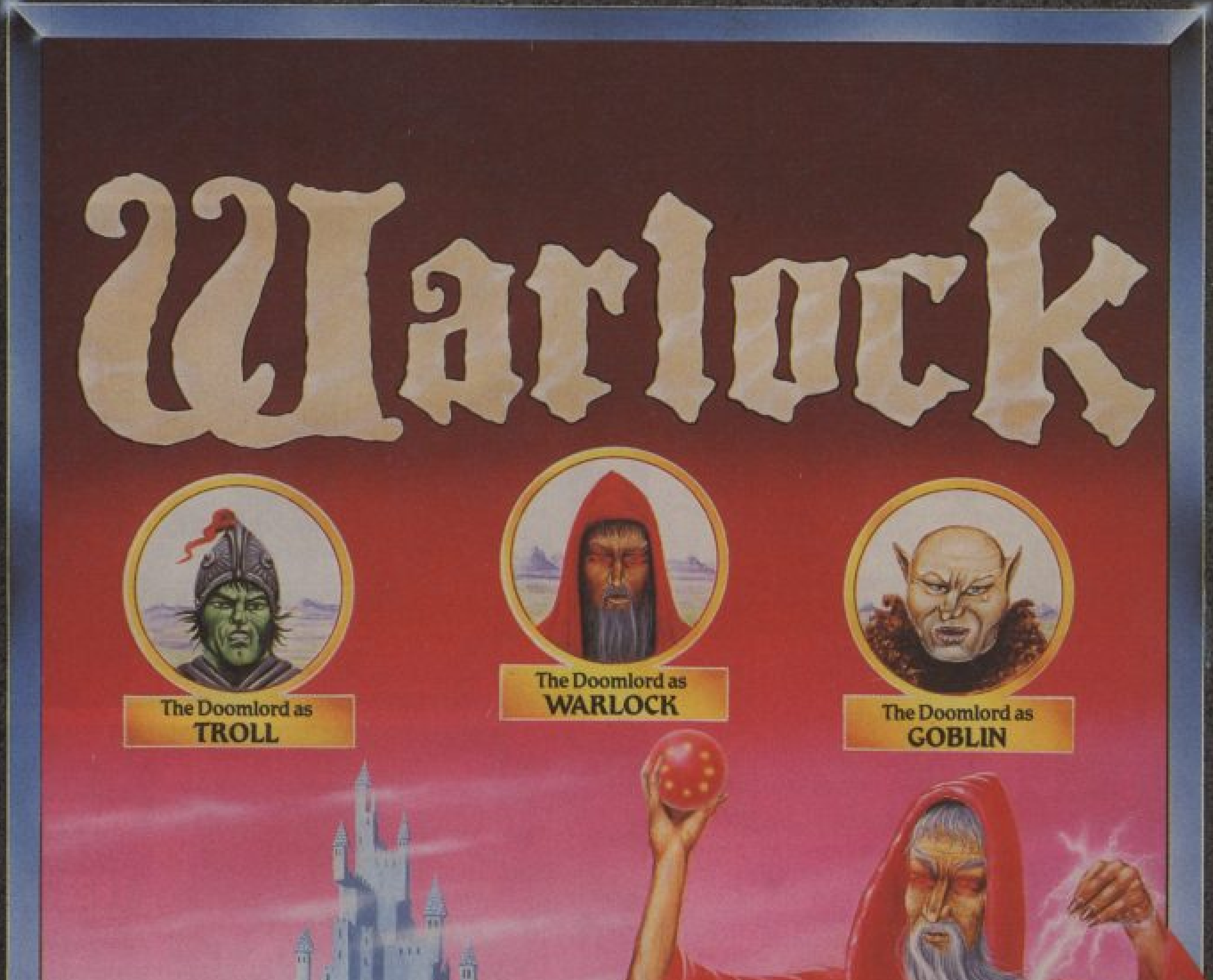
► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	8
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	8







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DOMARK

AUF WIEDERSEHEN MONTY

- MACHINE: CBM 64/SPECTRUM AMSTRAD/MSX
- SUPPLIER: GREMLIN GRAPHICS
- PRICE: £9.99/£14.99 (CBM AND AMSTRAD CASETE AND DISK)/ £7.99 (SPECTRUM/MSX)
- REVIEWER: PAUL

The world's most hunted mole now becomes the most travelled mole as Monty travels Europe, haunted and hunted by the police — Intermole, actually — in a bid to find freedom, peace and quiet.

Yes, Monty's back in another Gremlin escapade, *Auf Wiedersehen Monty*.

This is Gremlin's fourth Monty game and, if the title is anything to go for, the last. Somehow I don't think that will turn out to be true.

Anyway, for those who have encountered Monty before, here's a brief outline of his history.

Mr Mole was locked up by the law for taking coal to keep warm. He escaped and eventually fled abroad, lying low in Gibraltar. But his safe haven has been blown and he's on the run again. The game's challenge is to take Monty across Europe, raising enough money for him to buy a Greek island by the name of Montos from which there is no chance of extradition.

Basically the game comes down to a real treat for platform freaks as Monty explores screen after screen, solving easy puzzles, difficult puzzles and some puzzles which unless I had been told the answer, I don't think I'd have got in a long, long time.

If you take the time to map out the game, you'll find in turns into something which looks like a map of Europe.

Scattered around the screens are a multitude of objects, some useful, some lethal, others red herrings.

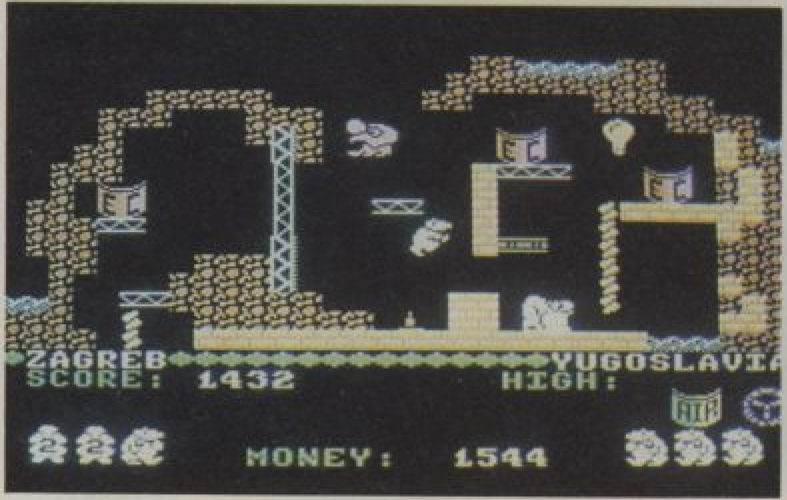
Each country has an apt problem to solve. In France Monty might just come across the Mona Lisa. If he could sell it, the money will be useful. And in Monaco Monty should really try and repair his car so he can compete in the Grand Prix. If he should win, the prize money won't go to waste.

Scatttered around the playing screens are plane tickets. Collect the ticket and get to an airport and Monty can travel to another country.

One piece of advice. It always pays to make Monty jump up and down if he appears to be in an impossible position with nowhere to go. In lots of places he will just bounce straight up, possibly out of trouble.

If you've got all the other Monty games, then you probably be panting to get to grips with this one and won't need much encouragement to get this. However, if you want a hugely challenging, addictive and entertaining platform game, then *Auf Wiedersehen Monty* is the one for you.

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
VALUE	9
PLAYABILITY	10





EXPRESS RAIDER

- MACHINE:C64/SPECTRUM/ AMSTRAD
- SUPPLIER:US GOLD
- PRICES:£9.99 (C64/ AMSTRAD)£8.99(SPEC) ALL DISCS £14.99
- REVIEWER:TIM

Yup, it's time for some rootin' tootin' cowboy capers arcade style. *Express Raider* is a mix of martial artistry and shooting skills set in the Wild West.

If you've played the game in the arcades you'll know how sometimes it can be ultra-frustrating — but fun at the same time. The computer version is the same. Parts of the action will make you want to throw your joystick at the screen. Parts of it will have you on the edge of your seat.

The message is that it's worth getting by the irritatingly difficult bits just to play the rest of the game.

The idea behind the game is pretty basic. You have to fight your way onto a train, fight your way along the top of it leaping from carriage to carriage, then it's on to horseback for a rip-roaring ride up the side of another train shooting up the gunmen defending the gold.

All this has to be done within a given time limit — fail and you lose a life. The good news is that you can always restart the game where you left off. None of this back to the beginning nonsense.

You can play the game in any one of three modes. Practise mode gives you an amazing 32 lives — but you only get to play the first two trains. There are eight in all.

In the normal mode you get five lives and get to try all eight trains. If you lose all your lives you get the option of going back to the beginning or hitting the fire button within ten seconds which places you back at the end of the train where you died with your boots on. A useful feature this. In advanced mode you have to go back to the beginning when you've lost all your five lives.

The action begins at the railhead where your cowboy has to battle a few goodies as the train — nice graphics here — pulls out.

If you fail to beat these railway guards — bit like the rush hour this part — you miss the train.

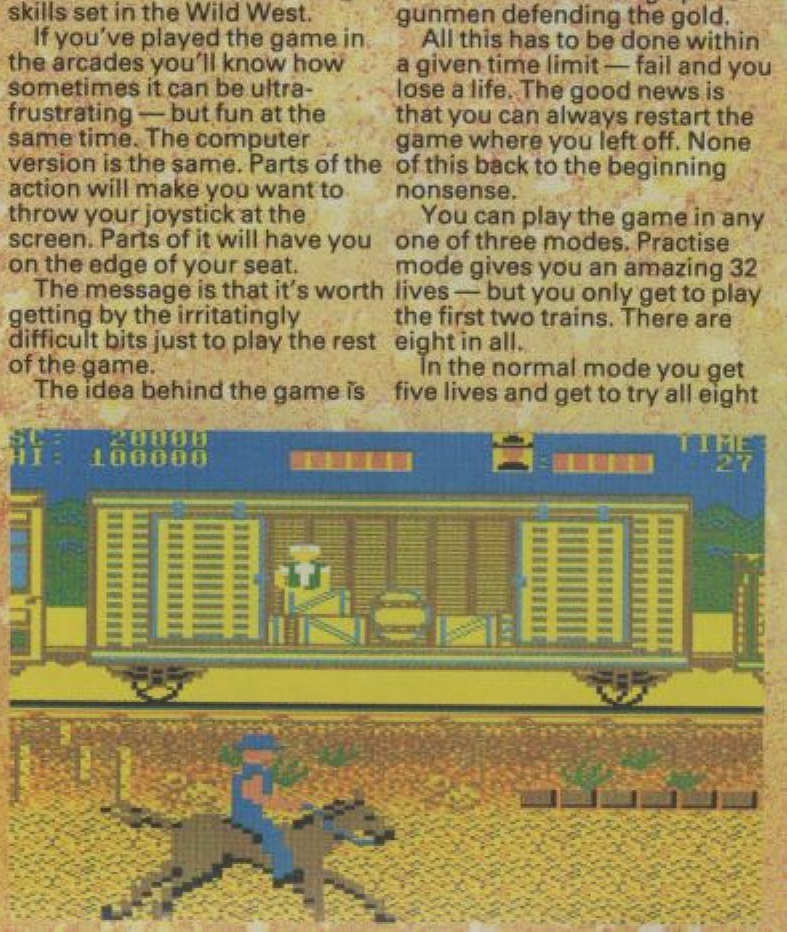
Beat them and you climb aboard and begin your battle to reach the engine before time runs out. The first couple of defenders are easy to get rid of with a few well aimed kicks and punches. The next guy throws bottles at you which are easy to dodge. Get in close and nail him with more kicks and punches.

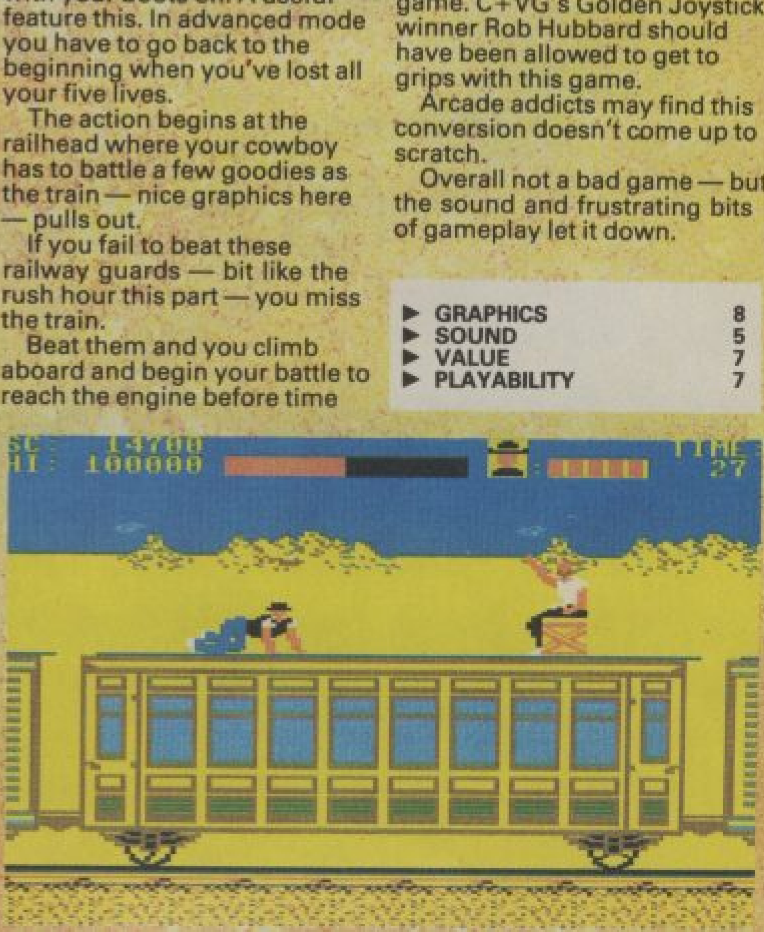
The one thing that really lets the game down are the sound effects. Silly little tunes and poor spot effects litter the game. C+VG's Golden Joystick winner Rob Hubbard should have been allowed to get to grips with this game.

Arcade addicts may find this conversion doesn't come up to scratch.

Overall not a bad game — but the sound and frustrating bits of gameplay let it down.

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	5
VALUE	7
PLAYABILITY	7

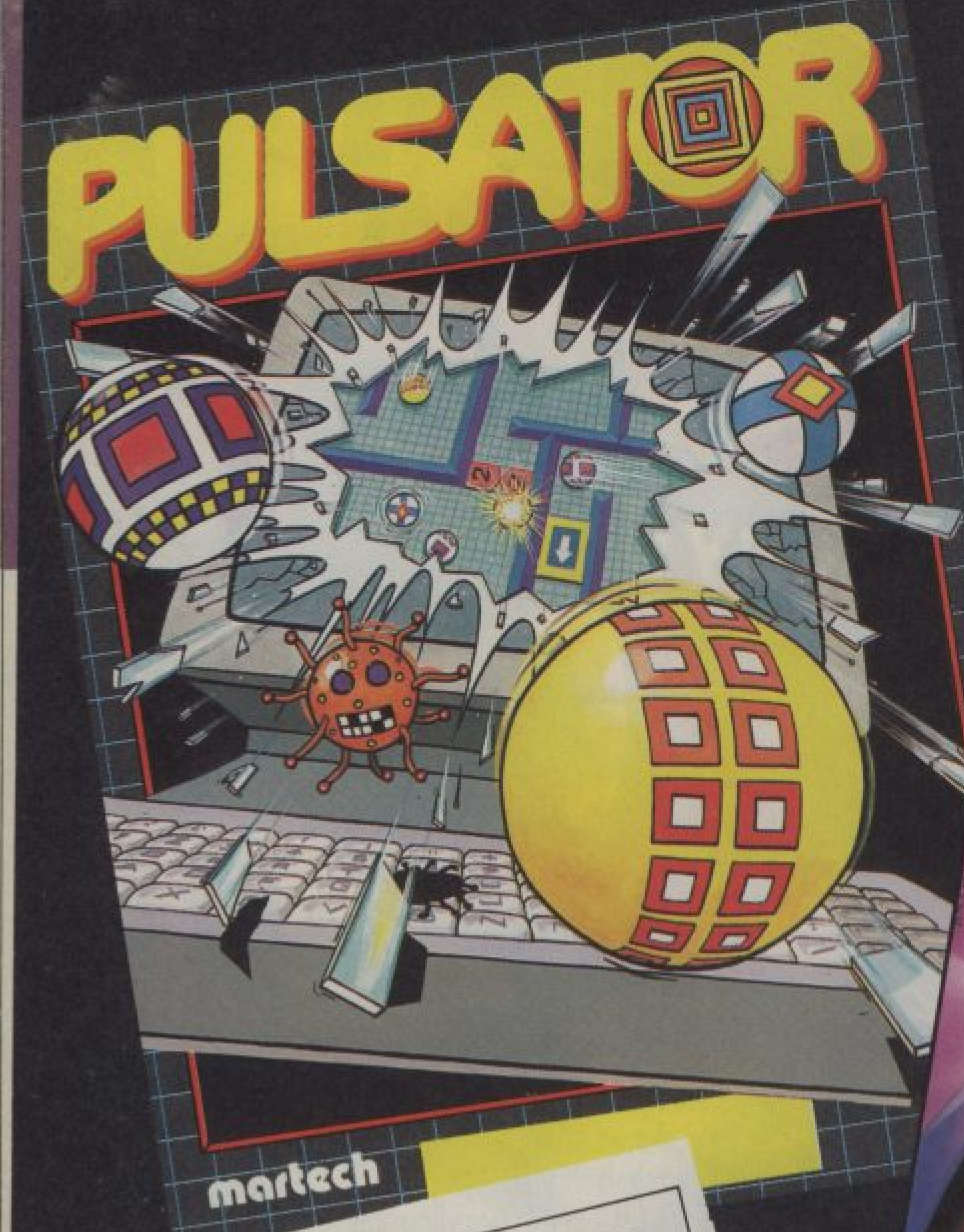






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PULSATOR

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But he is not alone. A variety of deadly and intelligent enemy pulsators patrol the mazes, each with its own devious way of making life difficult.

Blasting them to pieces will not always be the right thing to do – and anyway, it's easier said than done.

A fast moving and addictive game, requiring quick reactions and quick thinking. Only for those in search of a real challenge!

NEMESIS THE WARLOCK

Can Nemesis the Warlock fight his way through screen after screen of vicious Terminators to find and destroy Torquemada, cruel grand Master of Termight?

Wave upon wave of the evil horde fall before his gun or to crushing blows from his mighty sword Execessus, but still they come. As the battle rages, Torquemada exerts his twisted influence on the scattered corpses of his demented followers and they burst grotesquely into life as deadly scythe-wielding zombies.

Become Nemesis the Warlock, from 2000 AD, and enter this nightmare world – you may never return!!

COSMIC SHOCK ABSORBER

You are Cosmic Shock Absorber, Saviour of the Universe (hopefully!). Time and Space is falling apart (again?).

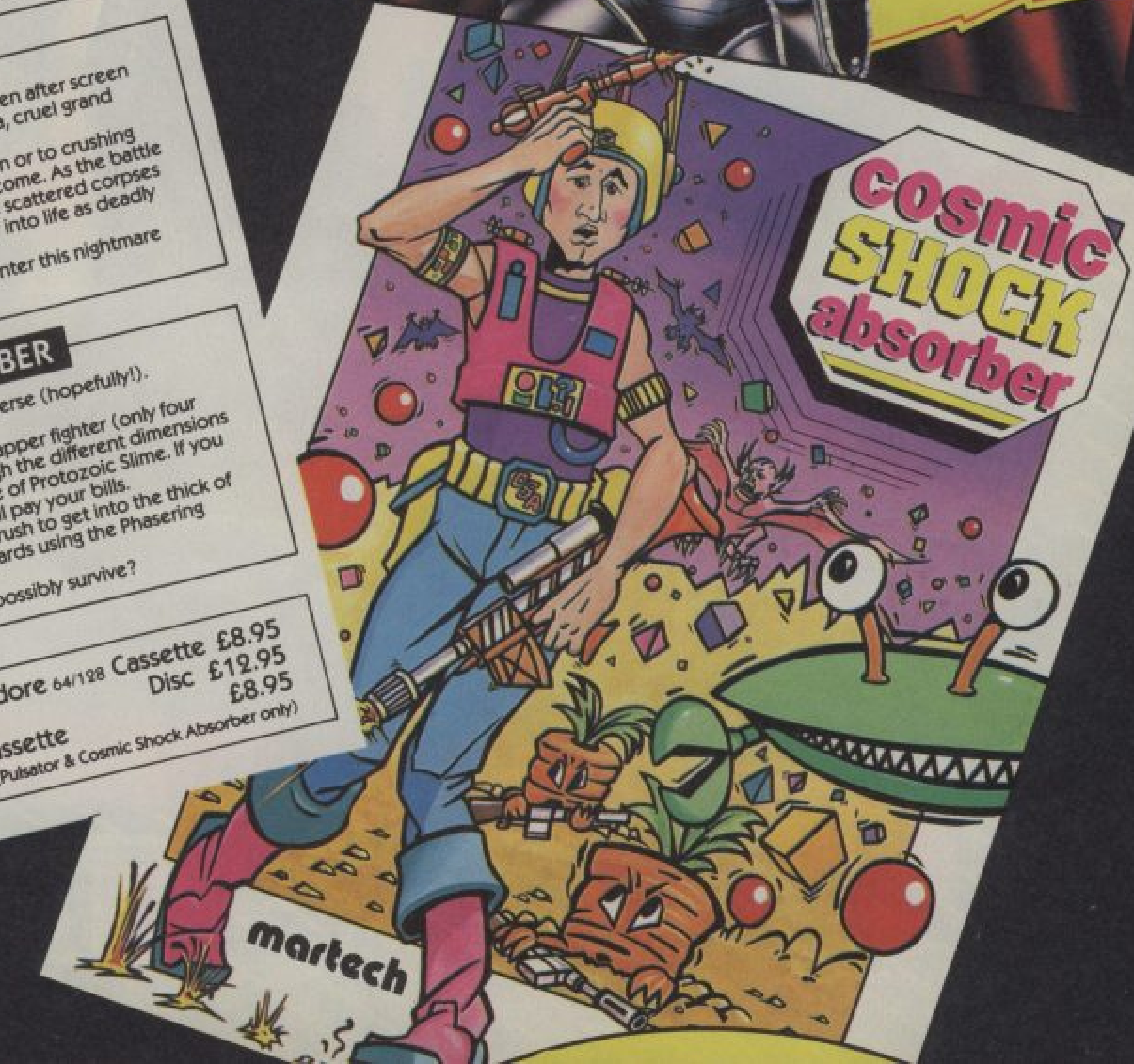
Cocooned safely in the cockpit of your CZ Neutrozapper fighter (only four repayments left) it is your job to blast your way through the different dimensions of chaos to the source of life itself, the Interstellar Lake of Protozoic Slime. If you make it, the Universe may survive, and most people will pay your bills.

But . . . wait a minute . . . it's worse than that. In the rush to get into the thick of the action – you forgot the 'How to Repair Circuit Boards using the Phasering Iron Manual'.

Oh No – Cosmic Catastrophe!!!! Can Earth possibly survive?

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Amstrad Cassette	£8.95	Disc	£12.95
Disc	£14.95	MSX Cassette	£8.95

(Pulsator & Cosmic Shock Absorber only)



MOTORBIKING

With the release of three bike racing games at once, it looks like being a rich time for motorcycle freaks everywhere. So on with your helmet and hang on tight for the low-down on the latest two-wheeled thrills on offer for the Amstrad.

SUPER CYCLE

- MACHINE: AMSTRAD CPC 464, 664, 6128
- SUPPLIER: EPYX/U.S. GOLD
- PRICE: £9.99
- REVIEWER: DAVID

Yet another racing game from the Epyx stable that has, in the past, brought you *Pitstop* and the brilliant *Pitstop II*. In terms of graphics and gameplay, *SC* offers very little to set the world on fire, but it is very playable despite the fact that cassette owners must continually rewind the tape to start a new game.

Once the main code has loaded you are asked to select one of three difficulty levels. Choice of level affects the time limit within which a track must be completed, as well as the amount you skid round the corners. The computer riders are also less aggressive on the lowest skill setting.

The bike's dashboard is a simple affair consisting of a speedometer, rev counter, and a column of lights that tell you which gear is currently selected. Control is by joystick or keyboard.

Your 750cc bike will lean into each bend with your knee-guard only microns above the tarmac. You'll start to drift towards the outside of a bend if your speed is too ambitious for any particular bend. This can be particularly tricky when negotiating a bend and trying to overtake a computer rider at the same time.

Each successive track gets more difficult to complete with the addition of extra hazards such as road works, oil and ice patches, and sharper bends. Many tracks are also set against new graphical backdrops ranging from the cities to the country, via the desert and Cape Canaveral. Some tracks must be negotiated at night.

Overall, *Super Cycle* has travelled well from the C64 original. It is well programmed, with smooth track scrolling, good sprite design and animation and, most importantly, it is fun to play. If you want a no nonesense bike racing game with plenty of action then look no further.

500cc GRAND PRIX

- MACHINE: AMSTRAD CPC 464, 664, 6128
- SUPPLIER: MICROIDS
- PRICE: N/A
- REVIEWER: DAVID

Grand Prix is a split screen, one or two player driving game designed to appeal to arcade players looking for a little extra depth.

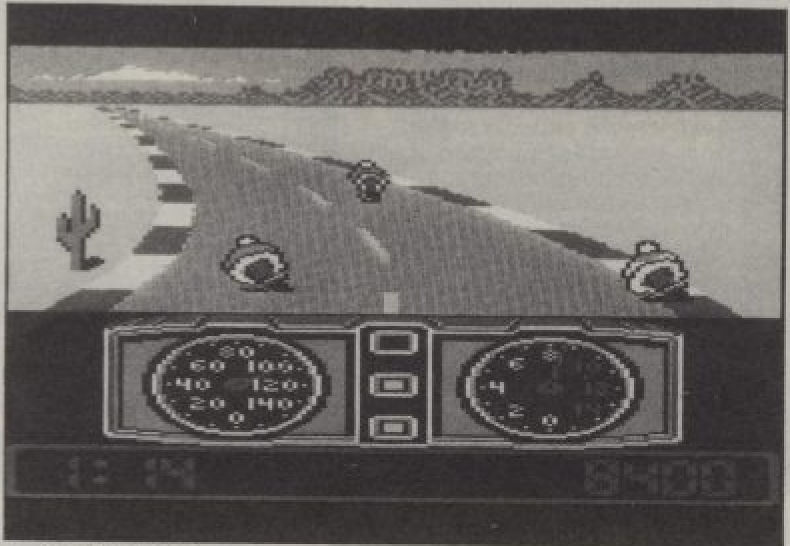
As with *Super Cycle*, your first task is to select a skill level which affects cornering ability and computer rider behaviour. You can also choose between the one and two players variations each of which can be played under practice or full race conditions.

There are twelve international grand prix tracks to choose from, each with its own set of quirks and problems — novices are advised to start with a track like Silverstone.

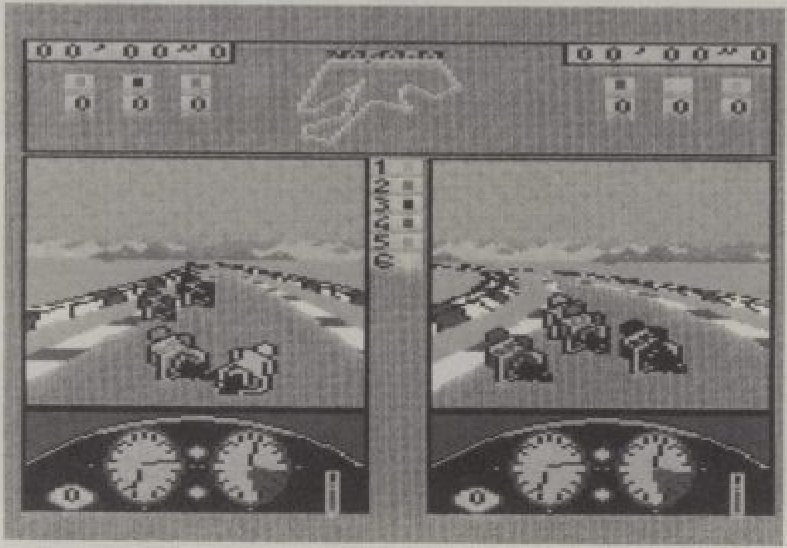
In race mode there are four or five computer racers (depending on whether a one or two player game is selected), making a total field of six riders.

Control is the same as *Super Cycle* but the program's response is far more sluggish with an almost unacceptable gap between moving the joystick, say to the left, and seeing your rider actually lean and turn that way.

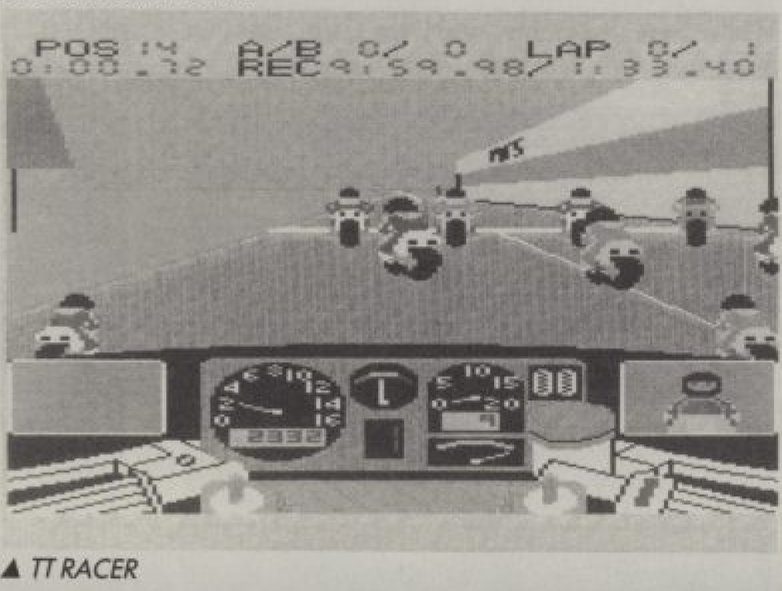
Although Microids have performed miracles on the Amstrad, if you want a really playable two player racing game and don't mind the extra two wheels, look seriously at *Pitstop II* (Epyx/U.S. Gold) before picking up the keys to this one.



▲ *SUPER CYCLE*



▲ *500cc GRAND PRIX*



▲ *TT RACER*

TT RACER

- MACHINE: AMSTRAD CPC 464, 664, 6128
- SUPPLIER: DIGITAL INTEGRATION
- PRICE: £9.95
- REVIEWER: DAVID

Digital Integration has always had a name for producing professionally designed and programmed games. The Amstrad version of *TT Racer* will do nothing but enhance that reputation.

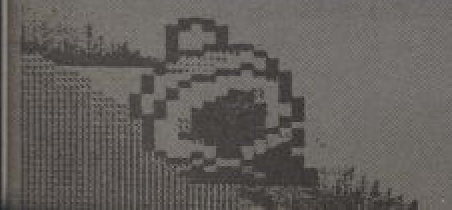
TT is a genuine motorcycle simulation in the mould of Firebird's excellent *Revs*. DI has gone to painstaking lengths to bring an air of authenticity not only to the program itself, but also to the comprehensive and well produced documentation that accompanies the package.

Before each race you have the option of improving your default grid position (10th out of 12 starters) by clocking a fast practice lap. Although it's not obligatory, you are strongly advised to take advantage of the practice sessions as they give you a chance to get used to each track.

If you are lucky enough to have a friend with an Amstrad you can link your two computers together via the RS232 port and then race against each other. The option screen lets you configure one Amstrad as the 'master' and the second as the 'slave'. The game is then loaded into each machine separately and away you go.

The pits areas appear as a solid yellow building at the start. When in a race of more than a few laps you'll need to pay them a visit to refuel and get new tyres. The number of times you do this will depend on the set up values you chose for your tyres before the race.

Although the tilting horizon is a little jittery the overall effect of driving *TT* is very realistic, making your head sway from side to side — driving you completely round the bend! A must for all lovers of racing games, simulations, and professionally designed and programmed software.



	SUPER CYCLE	GRAND PRIX	TT RACER
▶ GRAPHICS	7	8	9
▶ SOUND	7	6	9
▶ VALUE	7	6	10
▶ PLAYABILITY	9	5	8



OLLI AND LISSA

- ► MACHINES: C64/128
- ► SUPPLIER: FIREBIRD
- ► PRICE: £1.99
- ► VERSION TESTED: C64/128
- ► REVIEWER: CHRIS

"Humans are only scared of invisible ghosts . . ." This is the opening line to Firebird's new one, *Olli and Lissa*.

The game tells the story of a millionaire who is going to ship a castle stone by stone from Scotland to the States. This would be great, but someone is living there.

The dweller in question is Sir Humphrey, a very friendly ghost who plays with Olli and Lissa. He's not to keen on travelling, and so Olli and Lissa must help him.

To help him, you must gather ingredients for a potion form around the castle. This potion will make Sir Humphrey invisible, so that he can scare away the big American.

Sir H. will tell you what he requires, and a picture of it will flash in the air, showing you what it looks like.

Although this is a nice touch, it's pointless because it will be the only thing around anyway.

Once you know what to get, you can guide Olli around the castle, to search for the object. Once found he must take it back to Lissa, who will mix it in a pot.

Guiding Olli, you will come across some not-so friendly ghosts. These ghosts must be jumped over or avoided in true 'platform' style.

After returning a piece to Lissa, you will be able to search for the next object given, but you won't have to look that hard. You see all the pieces are on a different screen, which is always linked on to the last one.

To make it clearer, there are eight objects, and eight screens. One object on each screen. To collect object three you must go through screens one and two first.

Should you get all eight pieces, Sir H, will become visible and the game will end.

The thing that grabs me though, is the compelling gameplay.

Addictive, humorous and value for money are just some of the qualities of this game. A real cheap thrill!

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	7
► VALUE	9
► PLAYABILITY	9

Psi5 TRADING

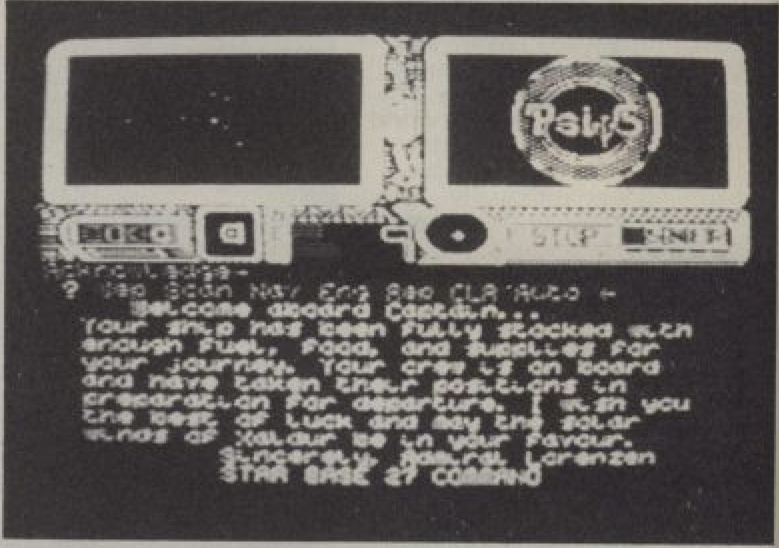
- ► MACHINE: SPECTRUM/C64/AMSTRAD
- ► SUPPLIER: ACCOLADE
- ► PRICE: £7.95
- ► VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM
- ► REVIEWER: JERRY

There are two ways to trade in space. *Elite* placed you alone in the cockpit. Whether you were bartering or blasting, you took overall control of the situation. *Psi 5* tries for an even more ambitious format, much closer to a *Star Trek* scenario. You become a fully fledged Captain, commanding a full crew.

I doubt that there has ever been a more ambitious game on the humble Spectrum. If ever a concept cried out for disk access, this it. But until the +3 arrives, the first adventure for tape users will be coping with *Psi 5*'s multi-load. This is made all the more tricky by an apparent crash once the crew is loaded. But don't panic; flip the tape, hit LOAD "", and soon you'll be ready for take off.

The secret of success in *Psi 5* lies on the ground though. If you don't obtain the right crew, it'll lead to problems when you're light years from home. Your ship has five posts to fill, in different departments, and six individuals to choose from in each case. It's up to you to decide whether the expert with blasters who knows next to nothing about missiles is a better bet than the multi-weapon expert who lacks field experience.

Even more ambitious is the

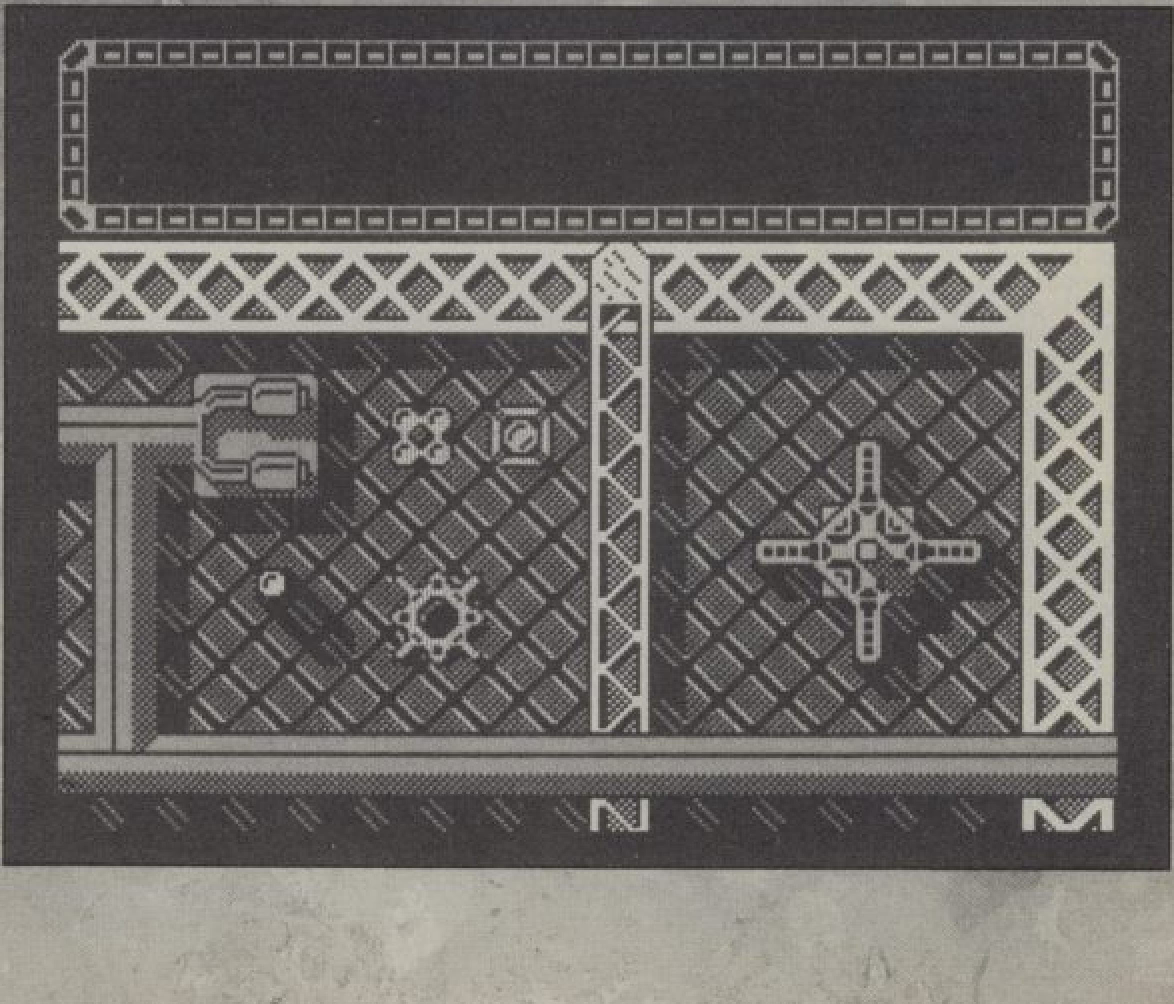


SHADOW

- ► MACHINE: SPECTRUM
- ► SUPPLIER: THE EDGE
- ► PRICE: £7.95
- ► VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM
- ► REVIEWER: JERRY MUIR

In space, nobody can hear you scream . . . "Oh no, not that lousy job!" The lousy job in question is a reconaissance trip round the outside of a Star Class Liner, to make sure that all's ship shape. At least you only have to do it once every five years, which wouldn't be too bad if it wasn't for the fact that the on-board computer has decided to make this the week for its nervous breakdown.

So there you are, all alone at



way that the potential crew have individualised characters, detailed in their reports. Can you afford to take on the engineering genuis who is headstrong and has had arguments with superiors in the past? Will you have time to keep an eye on a navigator who is slow to initiate actions and goes to pieces under stress?

With all these decisions it obviously makes sense to choose the simplest mission to start with. This won't pay too much, but there's less risk of getting lost in space or attacked by pirates if you play things safe. After that it's the treacherous second load and you're underway. Even blast off is a tricky business, but at least the instructions suggest the ideal sequence, and you'd be advised to follow it.

Psi 5 doesn't present you with the elaborate graphics of *Elite*, you can watch through the view-screen as that unidentified shop swoops in and lets you know that it's also unfriendly. Mostly though it's a mass of menus and messages, which can take a little time to learn, but at least they avoid the confusion of keys that would take an Einstein to understand.

You just need left-right and select to contact a department, and then a system of sub-menus lets you issue commands. Let's suppose that you're happily underway when that pirate appears. Contact the navigator and bring the ship to a halt. Now request scanning to examine the ship. Sit tight until it tells you what you're up against and the best choice of weapons, then move post haste to the weapons officer. Tell him to fire at will, using the relevant form of attack.

Play for a while though, and you'll eventually feel like Captain Kirk, taking messages from the crew and learning whether you made the correct choice. *Psi 5* has a few ragged edges, but it's good to see something of this scope attempted on the Spectrum. It's exciting and different, and you should give it a try.

▶ GRAPHICS	7
▶ SOUND	4
▶ VALUE	8
▶ PLAYABILITY	8



SKIMMER

the tail of a space juggernaut, and the only entry hatch lies for'ard, in the control section. Just to spice things up the defence mechanisms are still active and under the impression that you're a dangerous piece of space debris. So, they hurl everything that they've got at you!

Skimming across the surface of space liners has become an extremely popular pursuit, following the trail-blazed by *Uridium*. But don't think for one minute that *Shadow Skimmer* is yet another clone. Overcome the initial similarity and you're playing a whole new ball game. The one I have in mind is pinball.

If you've ever wondered what that silver bearing feels like as it ricochets off the pillars and sides of a pin table, wonder no more. Your skimmer behaves in just the same fashion whenever it collides with a piece of space architecture. Even worse, it recoils when it's hit. Suddenly you find yourself bouncing wildly from screen to screen.

Complete control is the key to escape. Unlike the *Uridium* craft, which looped and soared, the skimmers really feel like they're gliding just above the surface, with quite deadly acceleration but rather less accurate brakes. Such are the hazards of minimal gravity. Their pulse lasers only fire when you're moving too, which means you have to fly into the face of the enemy to blast them.

Skimmers fly low, but not so low that they can't flip over on their backs. This leaves them less well defended, but it also serves to sneak under some deck structures. It's a crucial manoeuvre and one that you'll need to perfect as soon as possible if youf're to progress from level one.

The Star Class Liner has three sections, all of which are interlinked, but not necessarily on the surface. Apart from zooming round tight corners and flipping under bulkheads, you have to descend into the cargo holds, through hatches which only open when you stop above them. By this stage you'll probably suspect that the designer of this Liner was a frustrated maze freak.

An added complication is that, before you can progress from one section to another, you have to destroy the key defence mechanism for the sector. The control panel, which surrounds the action window, shows you what this looks like, but it's still fairly well hidden and has to be shot. An accidental collision destroys it, but doesn't open the path to freedom!

You only have three shields, which won't last long if you insist on straying into the path of the defence drods as they stream out of their ports. You even lose strength if you do nothing, which does wonder to help maintain a sense of urgency! Add the maze element to the shooting and dodging, and you may wonder if you stand any chance at all.

Time, then, to slow down and admire the scenery for a moment. Seldom has the Spectrum looked so bright and colourful. There's been a revolution in Sinclair graphics, and at last ways are being found to cheat the notorious attribute clash. This is one of the finest examples yet.

The hull is a mass of girders and pipes, the mouths of boosters and unexplained deck machinery. It even appears to follow a logical layout, so that if you took the screens and layed them side by side, you'd have a jigsaw of a totally believable ship design.

My only fear about *Shadow Skimmer* is that, once you've solved it, it may lose some of its appeal. But possibly not, because when you know your way through the hazards, there's always the temptation to fine tune your performance and go for ever faster escape times.

▶ GRAPHICS	9
▶ SOUND	8
▶ VALUE	8
▶ PLAYABILITY	9

UCHI MATA

- ▶ MACHINE: SPECTRUM/ AMSTRAD
- ▶ SUPPLIER: MARTECH
- ▶ PRICE: £8.95
- ▶ VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM/ AMSTRAD
- ▶ REVIEWER: PAUL

I first got to grips with the Commodore 64 version of *Uchi Mata* towards the end of last year. I found it frustratingly difficult to get to grips with. Sadly, I've got the same problem with the Amstrad and Spectrum conversions. And they have the added disadvantage of not lookiing as good.

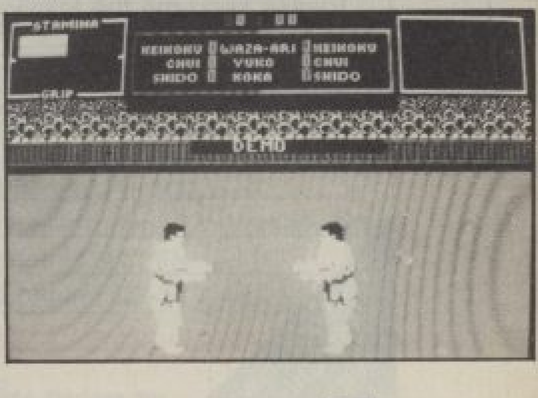
The graphics on the Spectrum curled lips from most people who wandered past while the games were being reviewed.

There's a practice made which is supposed to allow you to get to grips with your opponent — who won't fight back — and practice the various moves.

It's here I found things starting to go wrong. The most I could get my player to do was grab his opponent's jacket. There then followed a brief shuffle as I moved the joystick about to trying to produce a spectacular throw. Somehow I never seemed to make it. The players just stood facing each other. It doesn't make for thrilling moments.

Even in fight mode it seemed to be merely luck — and frantic joystick waggling — which allowed me to make some sort of throw. Most of the time I ended up the victim with the only belts achieved being the ones handed out by my opponent!

	Amstrad	Spectrum
▶ GRAPHICS	7	6
▶ SOUND	7	5
▶ VALUE	7	6
▶ PLAYABILITY	6	5





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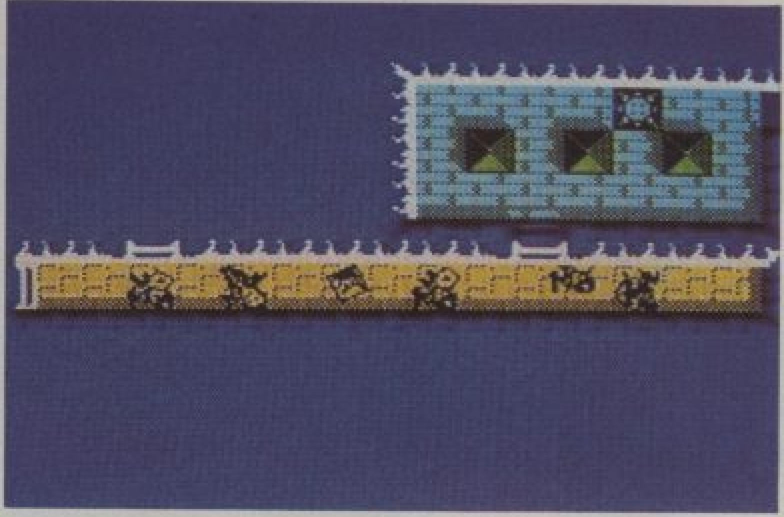
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RANARAMA

- MACHINE: CBM 64/AMSTRAD/ SPECTRUM
- SUPPLIER: HEWSON
- PRICE: £8.95 (CBM 64/ AMSTRAD cass), £7.95 (SPECTRUM), £14.95 (AMSTRAD disk), £12.95 (CBM disk)
- VERSION TESTED: CBM 64
- REVIEWER: PAUL

Elsewhere in this issue of C+VG you will have probably have seen Steve Turner's exclusive player's guide to *RanaRama*. That will give you some idea of the complexities of this game.

To some extent *RanaRama* is a return to Turner's *Dragontorc*-style of a couple of years back but with a higher degree of shoot 'em up to cater for current tastes.

Mervyn, a sorceror's apprentice, has turned himself into a frog, while trying to evade evil warlocks.

To triumph against adversity, Mervyn must take on and destroy 12 wizards who are hidden in each of the game's eight levels. There are between 50 and 100 rooms to each level, packed with a myriad of troops So you can see there's quite a lot of territory to explore.

There are eight levels of missiles, eight levels of power and eight types of shield for him to acquire and use. The easiest way is to beat wizards to win their runes and then convert them into the items you require.

The missiles, power and shields are all graded and the nasties on the later levels are graded too.

Spell times can also be obtained randomly in certain rooms at spell points.

The rooms are viewed from above and remain in darkness until Mervyn actually enters them. In this way you build up a map of the game as you go along.

When you kill a wizard you can then play a little sub-game in which you have to arrange the mixed up letters of *RanaRama* into the correct order. Now this appears a fairly simple task. However I still haven't managed to solve it with any degree of ease. My rare successes must be put down to luck.

As with *Dragontorc*, *RanaRama* involves a high degree of strategy. But the problems are not of such a brain-mangling order that the game grinds to a halt.

Good fun. A hit that shouldn't be missed.

Hewson continue to put out good quality games with the emphasis on something new and interesting each time.

I look forward to Steve Turner's next offering. I'm sure it will be every bit as good as *Rana Rama*.

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	8
VALUE	8
PLAYABILITY	9

C+VG HIT!

TERROR OF THE DEEP

- MACHINE: COMMODORE 64/ 128
- SUPPLIER: MIRRORSOFT
- PRICE: £9.95 CASS, £14.95 DISK
- REVIEWER: LEE

When I first sat down to play this, admittedly in a semi-drunken state, my initial impressions were "My God! Someone's trying to do a rip off of *The Eidolon*, and failing miserably!"

Anyway, after several pints of caffeine had been intravenously fed into my system, I finally came to my senses, and realised it was nothing like *The Eidolon*, in fact it was more like an underwater flight simulation!

The game is set at the close of the 19th Century after a shower of meteorites were seen falling from the skies over Loch Ness.

Strange creatures are later reported in the Loch. An eccentric engineer living by the shore has developed a diving bell and has selected you to explore the loch and rid the waters of its alien population.

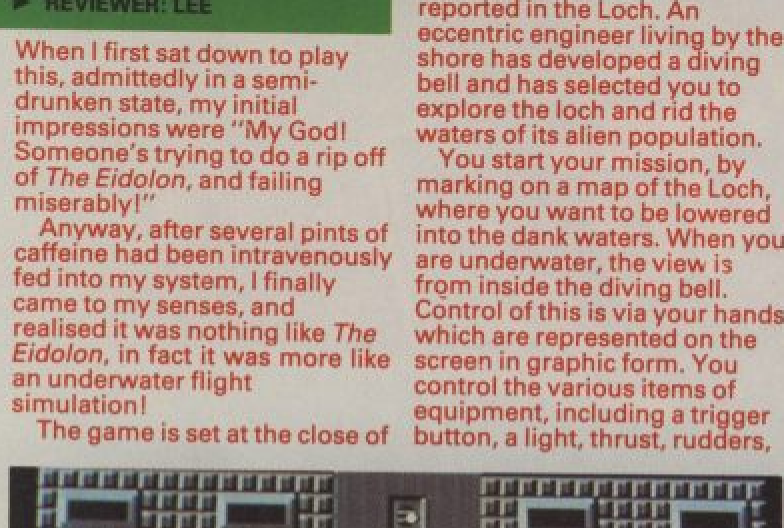
You start your mission, by marking on a map of the Loch, where you want to be lowered into the dank waters. When you are underwater, the view is from inside the diving bell. Control of this is via your hands which are represented on the screen in graphic form. You control the various items of equipment, including a trigger button, a light, thrust, rudders, energy wheel, and detonator to mention just a few by moving the joystick left and right, to move the hands onto the various controls, and then move the stick up or down to operate them. You must keep going up for air, as well as supplies and new weapons.

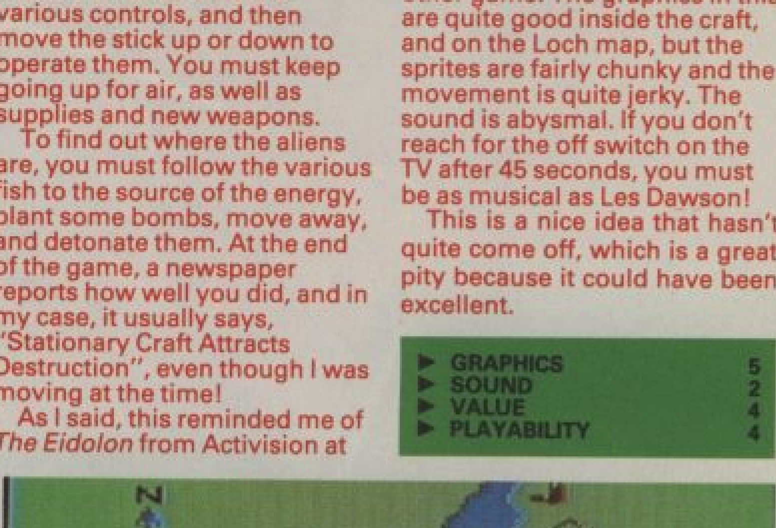
To find out where the aliens are, you must follow the various fish to the source of the energy, plant some bombs, move away, and detonate them. At the end of the game, a newspaper reports how well you did, and in my case, it usually says, "Stationary Craft Attracts Destruction", even though I was moving at the time!

As I said, this reminded me of *The Eidolon* from Activision at first, but on not too close inspection, I realised this didn't have the same attraction as the other game. The graphics in this are quite good inside the craft, and on the Loch map, but the sprites are fairly chunky and the movement is quite jerky. The sound is abysmal. If you don't reach for the off switch on the TV after 45 seconds, you must be as musical as Les Dawson!

This is a nice idea that hasn't quite come off, which is a great pity because it could have been excellent.

GRAPHICS	5
SOUND	2
VALUE	4
PLAYABILITY	4





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HEAD OVER HEELS

- MACHINE: AMSTRAD
- SUPPLIER: OCEAN
- PRICE: £8.95
- REVIEWER: PAUL

At first sight of *Head Over Heels* I thought I was back playing *Batman*, programmer Jon Ritman's last game. To tell you the truth I could have been playing any of the classic Ultimate games and the horde of clones.

It's very slick, very professional, very pretty and very addictive. And like *Batman* — remember the massive map C+VG printed? — it appears to be a huge game, packed with puzzles, tricks and complexities which should keep you occupied for hours. You'll probably end up bald from tearing your hair out!

In fact, programmer Jon Ritman says Head Over Heels is around twice the size of Batman. Gulp! How can you possible get all that into a computer?

On to the plot. The evil empire of Blacktooth has enslaved four worlds, subjecting their people to a rule of tyranny. And the empire's expansionary dreams are not yet fulfilled — and that fills neighbouring planets with a growing sense of unease.

The planet Freedom has decided to send a spy into the Blacktooth empire with the aim to ferment rebellion among the slave planets. To do this the spy must find the four crowns lost when the empire took over.

Why I say spy I should say spies, a pair of creatures which can operate individually but can also unite to form one entity. And those symbiotic creatures are Head and Heels.

The game opens where Head and Heels have been captured separated and jailed in the castle headquaters of Blacktooth.

The two creatures are separated by a wall. They both can set out to explore their surroundings. It appears to be a good idea to unite Head and Heels. I couldn't, but that's my problem. Once together and successfully joined their icons will light up.

Besides the world of Blacktooth, there are the following worlds to explore.

Egyptus, a planet with the emphasis on corpses, wrappings and stone pyramids. Could this be a clue to the layout of the place?

Penitientiary, the prison planet. Mountainous and hostile. Beware the pit. "Don't fall in," warns the cassette notes. If only I could find the pit I'd willingly fall in.

Safari, jungle, natives and traps await you.

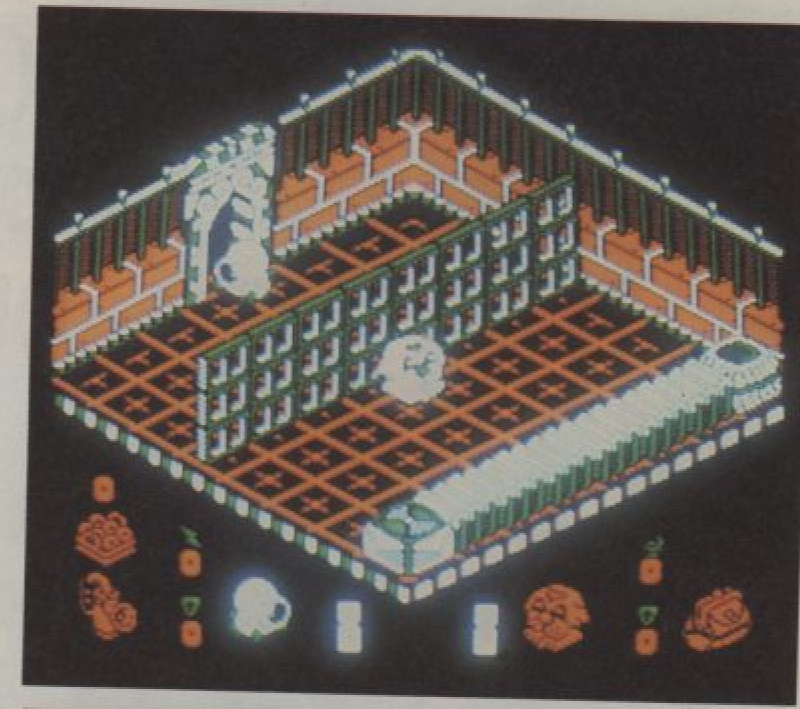
Book World, a world devoted to the emperor's love of western books.

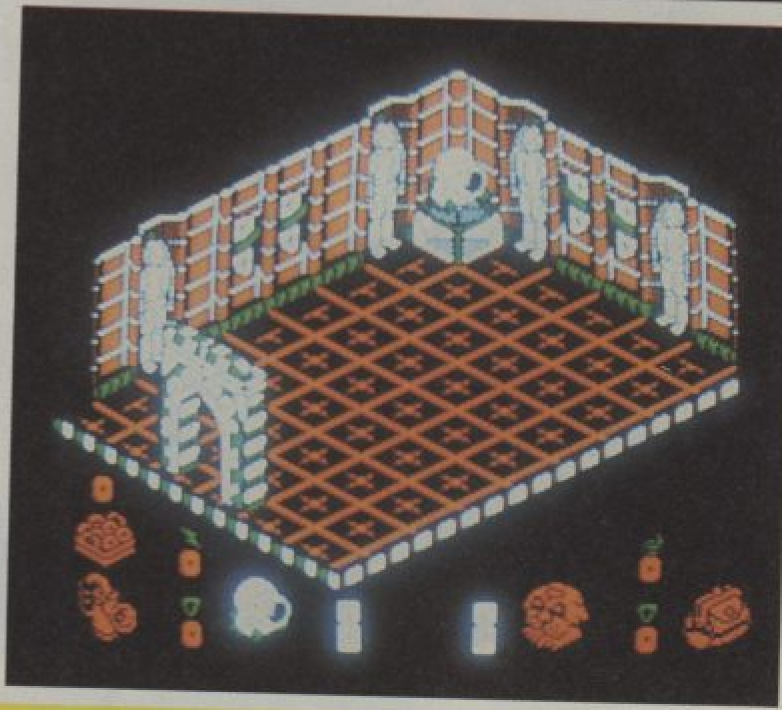
Scattered around the screens — all the ones I came across were graphically immaculate — are various objects which must be collected or can be used to help you negotiate the problems.

To be honest when I first started to play *Head Over Heels* I wasn't too keen. Another Ultimate rip-off, I thought. But before long I found myself lured into it and, quite frankly, I was having a good time.

GRAPHICS	10
SOUND	8
VALUE	8
PLAYABILITY	8

C+VG HIT!





THRUST II

- MACHINE: SPECTRUM 48/128
- SUPPLIER: FIREBIRD
- PRICE: £1.99
- REVIEWER: LEE

It's about six months ago that Firebird released *Thrust*, which became one of the best selling budget games in the past year. Now, Firebird has done the inevitable, and released a sequel, *Thrust 2*.

The game plays in virtually the same way, only the storyline has altered by any great means. For those among you who like a story with your games, here's the one for this game.

The Federal Resistance force has captured a small artificially created planet, which they plan to use as a base for the next offensive against the Empire.

Unfortunately, the planet is covered with a red dust, which prevents life existing on the surface, and so you get the job of collecting some orbs from underground and bringing them back to the surface, to help purify the atmosphere.

To make your life even harder than it already is, the orbs are unstable, and will explode after a short period of time, and android guards inhabit the underground caves.

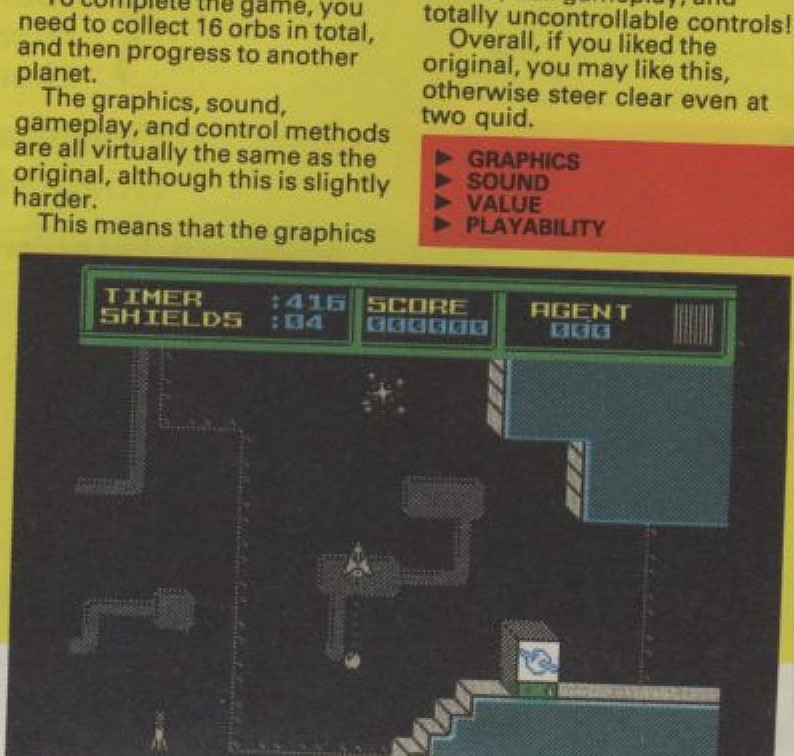
To complete the game, you need to collect 16 orbs in total, and then progress to another planet.

The graphics, sound, gameplay, and control methods are all virtually the same as the original, although this is slightly harder.

This means that the graphics are uninspiring, almost no sound, dull gameplay, and totally uncontrollable controls!

Overall, if you liked the original, you may like this, otherwise steer clear even at two quid.

GRAPHICS	4
SOUND	2
VALUE	6
PLAYABILITY	6

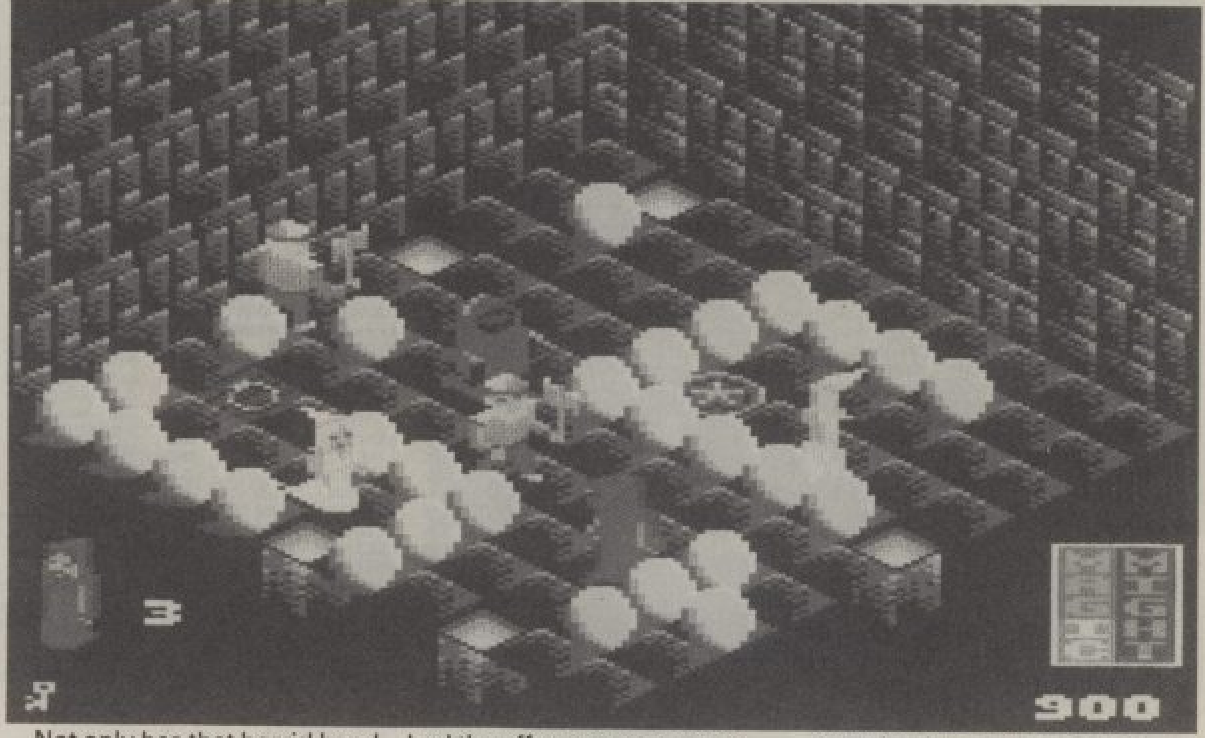


C+VG

REVIEWS

9

WARLOCK



- MACHINE: AMSTRAD CPC 464, 664, 6128
- SUPPLIER: THE EDGE
- PRICE: PRICE: £9.95
- VERSION TESTED: AMSTRAD DISK
- REVIEWER: DAVID

Things had been fairly cushy around the Fallen World for a century or two. As Doomlord of all things despicable, you had filled the post with admirable efficiency and ease. That is until the army of light, lead by that pussy-foot, The Light Wizard, started butting in where they weren't welcome — namely in your back yard!

Not only has that horrid band of goody-goodies penetrated the defences of your castle, 'Doomrock' but they've even had the affrontary to convert most of your faithful and evil staff to the light. Ugh! Patently this can't go on, something must be done before it's too late.

So now the army of light, not to mention half your trusted

AMAUROTE

- MACHINES: SPECTRUM/C64/ AMSTRAD/IBM/MSX
- SUPPLIER: MASTERTRONIC
- PRICE: £1.99
- REVIEWER: TIM

The spectre of Ultimate rears its head again in this new budget release from Mastertronic. Not quite as stylish as their last biggie, *Fued*, but reasonably playable to say the least!

Amaurote uses 3D isometric graphics to depict a vast futuristic city. The object of the game is to destroy twenty five insect colonies. At least 60% of the city must remain intact on the destruction of each colony for the player to continue to the next district.

The player is equipped with an Arachnus 4 armoured car, (a mechanical device with legs instead of wheels) and a small supply of "anti-everything" bombs. The bomb can be fired from the car at a variable angle and will continue to bounce until they hit either an insect or a building (the latter are extremely fragile so the bombs must be aimed carefully). The car can only carry a limited number of bombs so the player must return periodically to the city gates for fresh supplies, and, if necessary, repairs to the Arachnus.

The 25 districts of Amaurote are Tanelorn, Gotham, Heliopolis, Palatine, Vilmir, Ur, Capitoline, Agrippa, Canaan, Kaneloon, Traal, Dhakos, Esquiline, Offerton, Aventine, Valeron, Garathorm, Plato, Caelian, Ionia, Quirinal, Golam, Klant, Imrryr and Viminal.

Each district covers the equivalent of one hundred screens — although the play area is continuous so there are no such divisions.

The layout of each district is unique (there are no repeated screens) and different building are more prominent in different parts of the city.

On the destruction of an insect colony the player may progress to any adjacent district (making careful route-planning essential).

There are four basic types of insect, each with its own characteristics and purpose in life, they are: The Queen, Drones, Scouts and Rogues.

The Queen is the most important insect in the colony. If the Queen is destroyed then the whole colony is thrown into chaos. The Queen is the only insect in the colony which cannot be replaced, the Queen should be the player's main target.

The Queen has two roles to play in the colony. Firstly, she gives orders to the Drones acting on information provided by the Scouts: these could be to collect food or to attack an intruder (the player).

The Queen's other role is to breed; whenever an insect is killed, the Queen will create a replacement.

The Queen will usually be found near the centre of the colony and, as she is immobile and therefore vunerable, but she will always be heavily guarded.

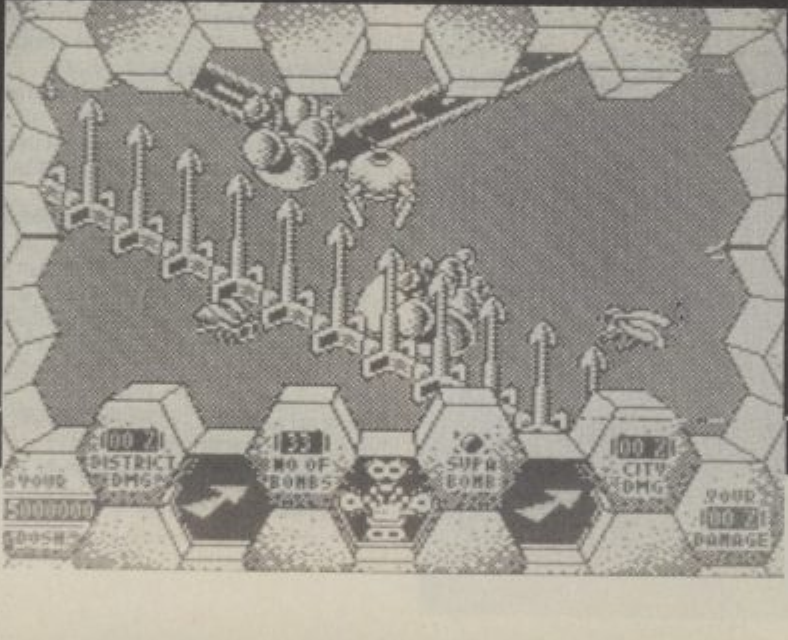
The Drones are the most common and least intelligent of the insects. They take their orders directly from the Queen, rarely making decisions for themselves. Their job is to collect food for the Queen and to defend the colony from outsiders. If you move too close to a Drone it will attack and continue to attack until either it or you, is destroyed. Drones are the strongest of the insects, it may take two or three direct shots to kill them.

Scouts are the only insects with the ability to fly. They are the Queen's information gatherers, they fly around the city searching for potential,food supplies.

Scouts will not attack the player but they must be avoided as they will tell the Queen of the player's whereabouts. If attacked, a Scout will retaliate but they are the weakest of the insects and are easily destroyed. Killing a Scout also means that any information it carries will be lost.

Amaurote is an absorbing game, if you're into taking time and trouble to get through to the end. It's a bit short on frantic action though — and the graphics, although well drawn, get a bit repetitive after the first few districts.

A game for players with time on their hands and an attention span longer than half an hour.



GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	7
VALUE	8
PLAYABILITY	7

demons and ghouls (you just can't get the staff these days!), are out to get you, and banish the Darkness from the Fallen World forever — perish the thought. And so, single-handed you are about to bodly take on the hoards of Good.

Luckily, you had an inkling something was afoot so, just in case, you've left a number of changling potions dotted about the castle. These marvelous concoctions allow you to change from one of your three forms to another, depending on the colour of the bottle. Thus you can change from your current state as a warlock, into a troll or a goblin, each of which has differing powers and weaknesses.

The main difference between your three states lies in the amount you can throw your weight about versus your strength in the magic department. As a troll, for instance, you could take on Geoff Capes with your little finger but couldn't pop the proverbial rabbit out of a hat. As a warlock, however, you could probably give Paul Daniels a good run for his money but you're blessed with margarine muscles!

One problem remains, where did you leave that 'Orb of Power' thingy? If only you could find it, the White Wizard would be putty in your hands . . .

Warlock is a pretty, isometric arcade adventure in which you must take The Doomlord around his castle picking up objects along the way, until you find the Orb. Then it's off to find and defeat The White Wizard, then home for tea.

Unlike *Fairlight*, also from The Edge, almost the entire screen in *Warlock* is taken up by some of the larger locations in the castle, but the refresh time between screens is still a little slow.

The effect is one of being deep down in a dingy dungeon flanked by solid walls made out of immovable granite — very atmospheric. Sometimes, though, it's a little difficult to see, or line up in front of, a few of the exits.

In the bottom corners of the screen are the remaining lives and inventory displays together with 'Magic' and 'Might' meters which help you decide when to take on all-comers and when to back away and look for something tasty to give you more energy.

Castle rooms are often divided by walls, made from lines of stone blocks. In some cases these blocks can be destroyed to make a path through to the other side of the room. Trap doors allow you to drop down to the floor below, while stepping on a pentagram will send you back up again. Other *Intense Magic Places* act as transporters to other parts of the castle but, be warned, these are not always reversible.

Although some objects supplement your might or magic levels, others have the opposite effect and it is important to discover which objects do which to stand any chance of defeating The White Wizard. Some room exits are locked and can only be negotiated with the aid of a key. Unfortunately the door locks again afterwards, so another key is needed to go that way again. Some doors are only locked in one direction and can be freely used when going the other way.

With reasonable sound and music, good graphic design, easy keyboard or joystick control, *Warlock* is yet another in a string of professionally put together titles from The Edge who seem to go from strength to strength.

- ► GRAPHICS 9
- ► SOUND 7
- ► VALUE 8
- ► PLAYABILITY 8

C+VG HIT!

FIFTH AXIS

- ► MACHINES: C64 & AMSTRAD
- ► SUPPLIER: ACTIVISION
- ► PRICE: £9.95 CASS
- ► VERSION TESTED: C64
- ► REVIEWER: CHRIS

The 5th Axis made its debut on the Amstrad about nine months ago, and was quite good.

The game is set in the future, and has the universe all worried about its existence. You see, this professer bloke built a time machine, and used it to collect artifacts from different times.

What's wrong with a bit of the ol' time travelling? Well, while on one of his many shopping sprees, his machine exploded, and scattered itself about everywhere, and I mean everywhere!

The world is now mixed up, and you must go and straighten things out, collect the parts of the machine, and return the artifacts to there corresponding time zones.

To travel back and forward through time, you must use a new teleporter, which has just been invented. Very convenient.

By running about collecting the souvenirs the Prof brought back, you can the transfer them back home. The teleport won't be active until you have collected all the right objects or when you kill enough of the professer's robots.

These droids, built to aid the Professor, will go mad and attack you on sight. You must use your skills in the martial arts to overcome them.

Once you have completed stage one, you will be teleported through time to recover a piece of the time machine.

If you succeed, you will be show the piece and then you can continue collecting items. Fail and you will have to go through the last stage again.

Each of the time zones has different graphics, but the lab remains the same, naturally.

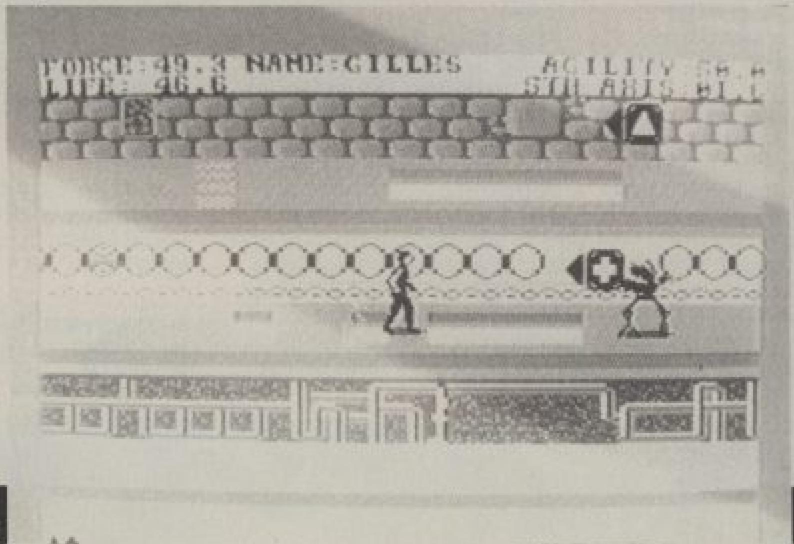
The graphics are quite good in some places, particually on the main character animation. He jumps and kicks very well in a sort of *Impossible Mission* style.

The sound comes in the form of two annoying tunes, the first one's not too bad. Not up to the usual standard though.

The game played better on the Amstrad, but that doesn't mean the 64 version is bad, just not as good as the original.

Check it out, but don't expect too much.

- ► GRAPHICS 7
- ► SOUND 7
- ► VALUE 7
- ► PLAYABILITY 7



C+VG REVIEWS

10

LEADERBOARD

- ► MACHINE: SPECTRUM 48/128
- ► SUPPLIER: U.S. GOLD
- ► PRICE: £9.99
- ► REVIEWER: BRIAN

About eight months ago U.S. Gold said they were going to release *Leaderboard* on the Spectrum. An impossible task I thought, but after numerous delays they have finally done it. Not only have they done the impossible but they also get full marks on this fantastic conversion.

Considering the limitations of the Spectrum, U.S. Gold has produced the best sports simulation ever seen on this machine. The gameplay of *Leaderboard* has not changed from conversion to conversion and is very easy to get to grips with. I have been hooked on *Leaderboard* ever since my first stroke of the ball and now I enjoy playing all four versions of it, soon to be five when the Amstrad version is released.

Leaderboard is a golf game which gives a true *three dimensional* perspective view of the course from behind your man. There are four courses included each consisting of 18 holes, so those of you who bought *Konami Golf* throw it away and rush out for the number one choice.

The club selection is from a 1W down to a PW. When you have chosen your club the strength of your shot has to be judged by means of a rising guage. After the strength comes the hook or slice which is the hardest bit to judge as the gauge falls so fast. Once you are on the green you are given a putter and have to judge the slope of the green by means of a stick in the ground and a shadow. The putter can hit the ball up to a maximum of 64 feet but can be more downhill.

When everyone has holed out a score card is displayed for each player one after the other to chart your progress, then it is ont the next hole. Full marks have to go to U.S. Gold on this excellent conversion of a CBM64 classic which could have easily turned out to be utter rubbish.

- ► GRAPHICS 8
- ► SOUND 3
- ► VALUE 9
- ► PLAYABILITY 8

C+VG HIT!

C+VG REVIEWS 11

ATARI HITS 7

- MACHINE: ATARI 400/800/XL/XE 48K
- SUPPLIER: ENGLISH SOFTWARE
- PRICE: CASSETTE £9.95, DISC £14.95
- REVIEWER: BRIAN

English Software seem to be bringing out a compilation every three to four months on the Atari. *Atari Smash Hits* was released about October and now *Smash Hits 7* is on the market. The only problem with these compilations is that one game appears on them about three times. It was *Jet Boot Jack* on the very first three Smash Hits, now it is the time of *ElektraGlide*, which has appeared on Smash Hits 5, 6 and 7.

The other titles included on this compilation are as follows: *Colossus Chess 3.0*, *Blue Max* and *Alley Cat*. The latter of these titles I have never heard of before and it turns out to be a good game.

ElektraGlide will be the most famous title out of the four. On the CBM64 I found this game a bit of a let down, but the Atari version is very good. The animation on the title screen is of the highest quality, especially the flag waving in the wind. The idea of the game is to race against time around three different countries, with three different types of steering control. To hinder you on your progress are three dimensional hazards which smash into you. This include a bouncing ball, a rotating triangle and cylinders which are dropped from a plane.

The music that plays while you are racing is excellent and shows the music capabilities of the Atari at its best. *ElektraGlide* is well worth its place on any compilation, but this is its third time and in my opinion is too much.

Alley Cat is a total surprise to find on a compilation like this, I for one had never heard of it before, but I do enjoy playing it. The idea is you play the part off Freddy the cat and have to steel kisses from your beloved Felicia. To succeed in this certain tasks must be performed to show your courage to Felicia. If you do complete a task you are given the chance to steal a kiss and progress to the next level. The tasks vary from having to chase four mice out off a piece of cheese to eating twelve goldfish while avoiding electric eels in a goldfish bowl. If you stay on the ground too long you will be caught in a fight with Bowser the dog. To hinder you is the mad housekeeper's broom which will sometimes call on Bowser for help.

The graphics and sound are average for an Atari game but it is four years old. The game has a very high level of addictiveness because you just keep playing to see Freddy steal a kiss from Felicia.

Blue Max is another famous game for the Atari and is again four years old. The objective is to make a final assault on three specially marked targets within the city, you have only one plane and very little time to accomplish the mission. On completion you will be rewarded by the title "THE BLUE MAX". This may sound easy but you have everything against you, ie, planes and anti-aircraft guns.

You are able to bomb the targets or go on a bombing run and shoot the enemy planes down during the numerous dogfights. At certain intervals a chance is given to land so damage can be repaired and the plane rearm and refuel. The sound and graphics are dated but that is expected for a four year old game.

Now if you want a change from the arcade element then *Colossus Chess 3.0* is for you, chess is not one of my strongest points as the computer found out, it kept beating me. The instructions are concise and well set out. The board display is clear and easy to follow, even for beginners to chess.

The program has got a very good reputation and is highly recommended if you want a good game of chess. The program allows you to record upto 90 games on one side off a disk, so you do not have to finish the game in one sitting.

Smash Hits 7 comes highly recommended.

C+VG HIT!

▶ GRAPHICS	7
▶ SOUND	8
▶ VALUE	10
▶ PLAYABILITY	8



THUNDERSTRUCK 2

- MACHINES: BBC/ELECTRON
- SUPPLIER: AUDIOGENIC SOFTWARE
- PRICE: £7.95 (TAPE) £11.95 (DISK)
- VERSION TESTED: BBC
- REVIEWER: NICKY

As you might imagine from the title, this is the sequel to *Thunderstruck*, wherein our hero Spreco, the Space Refuse Collector, found himself in a medieval castle with puzzles to solve.

Now the intergalactic dustman is back home at the Droidcorp factory complex on Homebase 5, where there's just one snag — all the humans have been enslaved by the rotten old Mindmaster, who now controls the complex. Spreco has one chance to turn the tables. If he can find the four pieces of the Deacti-Unit which the Mindmaster has carelessly left scattered around the place, he can assemble it and use it to destroy the villain.

This is a big game. There are 130 locations (although I have to take the author's word for that!) featuring a variety of creatures (friendly and otherwise), hazards, objects to pick up and use, and of course puzzles.

Apart from the usual keys for moving Spreco around (left, right, up ladder, down ladder and jump), you can also pick up and drop objects and use the computer consoles scattered around the place. These are rather a novel idea. When you're standing in front of one, you can examine the objects you're carrying, find out your location, give an object to any droids, machines or aliens that might be nearby, and take it back again.

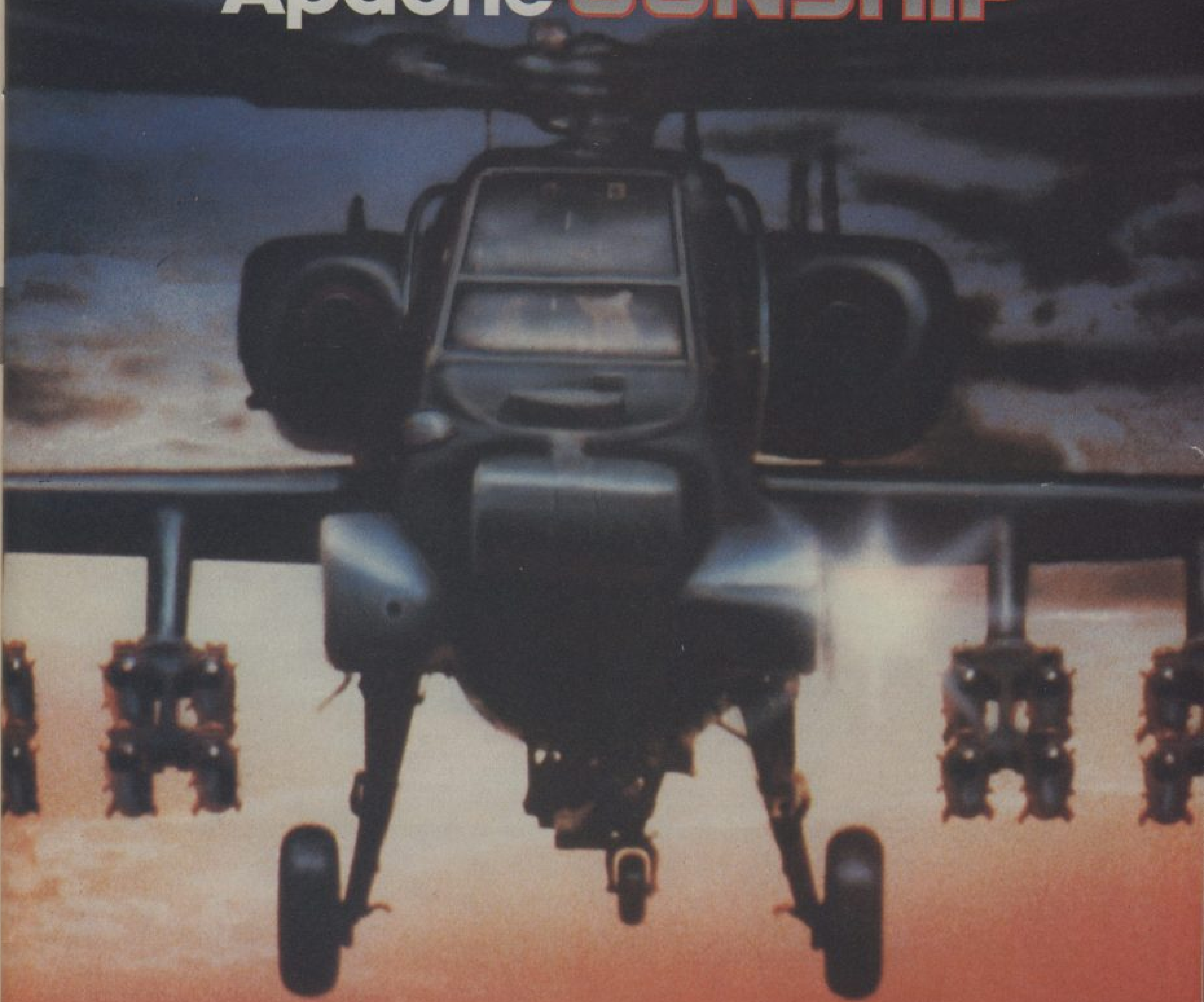
There's also an energy meter which shows you how fast Spreco is tiring and a box which displays the objects he's carrying. It also gives your current score.

The graphics are up to the standard of *Thunderstruck* — colourful, lively and smooth, and the sound is OK. Like *Thunderstruck*, though, I found one or two glitches. I got caught in an apparent dead end, and the only way I could get out of it and play again was to reload the — lengthy — tape. Annoying.

But there's plenty going on and plenty to do, and the game could keep you going for a good long time.

▶ GRAPHICS	8
▶ SOUND	6
▶ VALUE	7
▶ PLAYABILITY	8

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PRESIDENT

- ▶ MACHINE: AMSTRAD, SPECTRUM/CBM 64
- ▶ SUPPLIER: ADDICTIVE
- ▶ PRICE: £9.95 (AMSTRAD/CBM CASS) £8.95 (SPECTRUM) £14.95 (CBM DISC)
- ▶ REVIEWER: PAUL

Something tells me the peasants are not took keen on my style of leadership. The latest opinion poll says they hate me. Must be something to do with the war, famine, disease and my — sorry — our country's rather healthy bank balance.

Still the United Nations seems pretty keen on me. They reckon I'm a good leader. That makes a change from the accusations of tyranny they were throwing at me last year.

With just one month to go before I face the electorate with my main opposition party sitting rather comfortably on a 96 per cent lead in the polls, I somehow get the feeling I won't be enjoying a second term of office. Sent into a exile at an early age.

Well power is the name of the game in Kevin "Football Manager" Toms' latest offering, coping with economic survival, defence, health, famine and getting votes. It's been a long time coming as well. It was originally meant to see the light of day around the time of the PCW Show back in September.

President is an update of all those "run your own country games" such as *Kingdom* and *Dictator* which were around about five years ago. The *President*, however, is a lot slicker.

The setting is an unknown country, possibly Middle Eastern judging from the amount of oil, sand and tanks around the place.

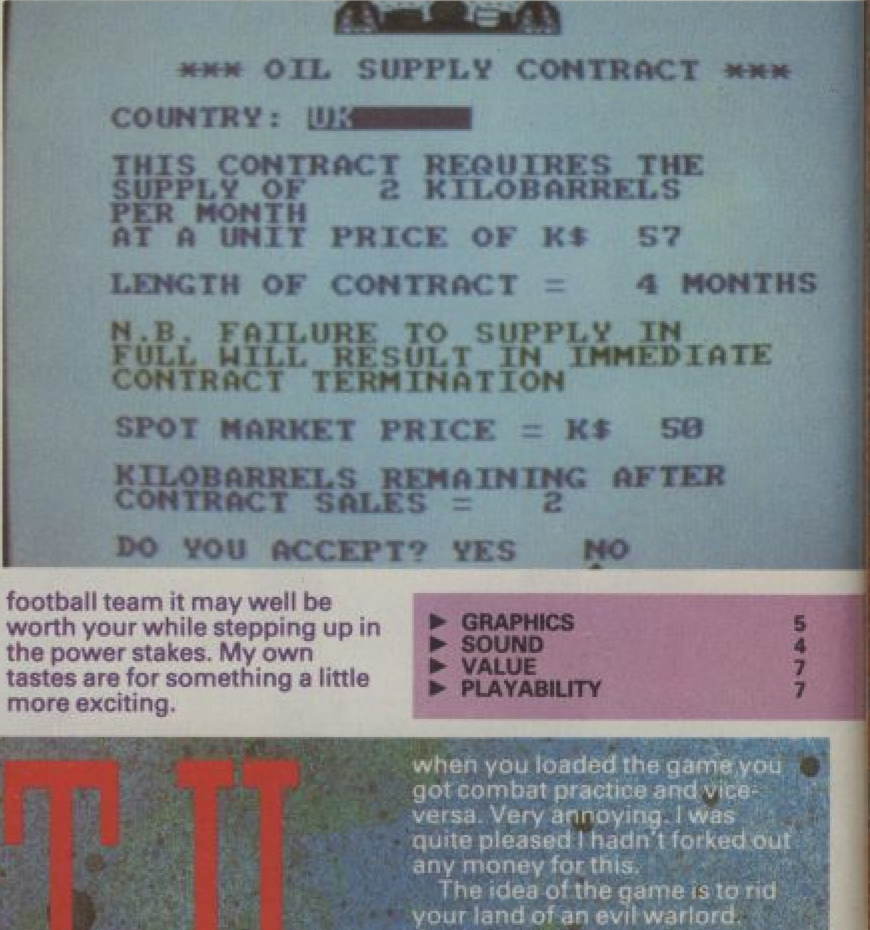
You have an initial choice of whether you want your country to be poor, of medium wealth or filthy rich. The term of your presidency before facing the electorate is two years or 24 complete moves of the game.

The monthly duties involve oil exploration and development, planning for and fighting off attacks by hostile countries, food production, looking after the health of the nation, finding and fulfilling contracts from other countries to supply oil, wheeling and dealing on the gold and currency markets. It's really like a complicated juggling act. And at the same time you've got to keep an eye on what your people think. Policies which you may be convinced will benefit your country may tend to be incredibly unpopular.

Strategy is everything in this game. The graphics and sound are really worth mentioning.

Who was it that said "a day is a long time in politics". Well two years of being President seemed an awful lot longer. In many ways the fun extracted from this game is the same sort of fun people get from Football Manager — and that is a massive selling game. So if you loved managing your own football team it may well be worth your while stepping up in the power stakes. My own tastes are for something a little more exciting.





▶ GRAPHICS	5
▶ SOUND	4
▶ VALUE	7
▶ PLAYABILITY	7

FIST II

- ▶ MACHINE: SPECTRUM/CBM64
- ▶ SUPPLIER: MELBOURNE HOUSE
- ▶ PRICE: £8.95
- ▶ VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM
- ▶ REVIEWER: PAUL

I loved *The Way of the Exploding Fist* when it came out on the Commodore 64. It was magnificent. A joy forever. Other versions on other machines, however, failed to match it.

The long-awaited *Fist II* on the 64 was quite frankly a disappointment. Gone was the frantic action, replaced by a lot of pointless wandering broken up by a few fights. There was no sparkle, nothing to make you gasp. The legend of *Fist* was tarnished.

Sadly the Spectrum conversion of *Fist II* does nothing to restore that legend. If it had just been a mediocre game — which it is when compared to other martial arts games — that would have been just about acceptable. But other things conspire to make *Fist II* really annoying.

First of all the cassette case disintigrates on first opening. The flimsy plastic hinge had broken. Okay that happens a lot these days. Side One of the cassette contains the game program, Side Two a combat practice program. Fairly straightforward you would think — except that the cassette label has been stuck on the wrong side of the cassette. So when you loaded the game you got combat practice and vice-versa. Very annoying. I was quite pleased I hadn't forked out any money for this.

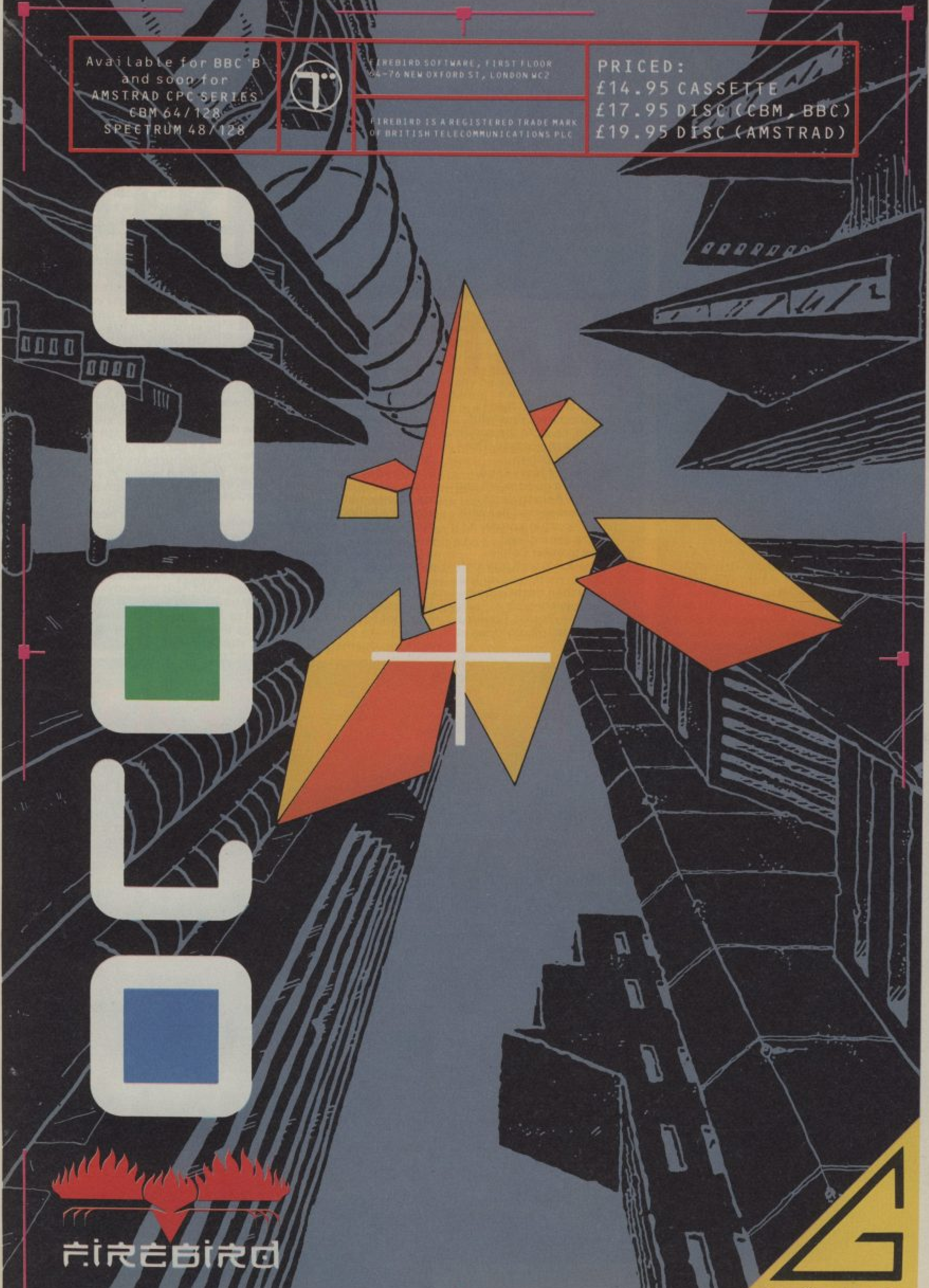
The idea of the game is to rid your land of an evil warlord. Again you get the same pointless wanderings — or rather running about — broken up by a few fights, attacks by panthers, collect scrolls, blah, blab, blah.

The fights at least are similar to the old Fist. All the same moves, punches, kicks, leaps etc. That's some compensation — except that during one fight my oppenent appeared to seize up giving me an easy — and very boring — target.

Fist II is too lightweight to stand comparison with *The Way of the Exploding Fist*. All things must pass. Sad but true.



▶ GRAPHICS	7
▶ SOUND	6
▶ VALUE	6
▶ PLAYABILITY	6



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MAGIC MADNESS

- MACHINE: C64/128
- SUPPLIER: ANCO
- PRICE: £7.95
- REVIEWER: TIM

This is the best Anco release for ages. It's a fun, very playable and extremely addictive scrolling arcade adventure with enough features to keep you glued to the screen for hours. And at just £7.95 it's a real bargain buy.

The plot goes like this. A long time ago, in a country called Neverland, four magicians ruled and each one of them derived his knowledge from a magic scroll.

One day, the bright sky clouded over and with a deafening roar. Colo the sorcerer appeared. Powerful and wicked, he stole the scrolls and killed the magicians. The nightmare had began.

The people of Neverland remembered a good witch and asked her for help to destroy Colo. They presented her with four items: a cape, a cross, a wand and a sand glass.

She has to enter Colo's burrow, which is well guarded by his hench men, recover the scrolls and then destroy Colo.

The burrow consists of four levels: Divine, Forest, Caverns and Ice. One scroll is hidden at each level.

You will have to search right through the cavern to find the guardian Ant Eater, who will hand over the scroll to you.

You can jump or drop to different levels in the burrow. During your search, you will come across chests. The chests may contain bonus points or time or a balloon to help you climb a level or a magic weapon.

Use the magic weapons to exterminate Colo's henchmen.

Sounds easy. But it isn't. And you'll have a whole lot of fun attempting to bring sweetness and light back to Neverland.

It will take you a bit of time to work out the magic weapon control system. You activate the one shown in the top left hand corner with the space bar. There's lots of stuff at the top of the screen which can demand too much attention when you're trying to get out of tight spots. But this is a minor quibble.

There are seven nasties not including Colo. They are:
Marhko: Armed with a solid cudgel, he kills on contact. Not affected by shooting.

Goblin: Has a severe bite. Use any weapon to kill it!

Merry Goblin: Happily runs towards you and sprinkles an icy fluid to freeze your magic weapon! Use the Cross to fight him until the fluid evaporates.

Skeleton: Turns you into dust on touch. It can't be destroyed by shooting or fire.

Lift Genie: Desperately tries to catch you and take you down two levels. It can't be shot, but can be dodged.

Nicholas: He is very dangerous. You will get 5000 points when you kill him and release birds worth 1000 points.

As we've already mentioned, the game takes place on three scrolling levels. You have to explore all of them thoroughly in order to discover the four scrolls. And you need all four to defeat Colo.

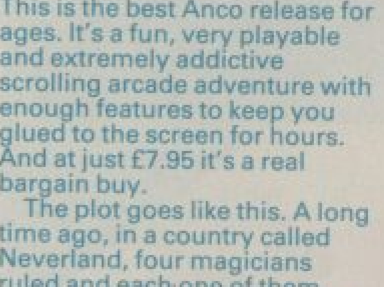
The graphics are colourful, the sounds are good and game play is great! Get it — it's magic!

▶ GRAPHICS	8
▶ SOUND	8
▶ VALUE	9
▶ PLAYABILITY	9

C+VG HIT!

THE SYDNEY AFFAIR

- MACHINE: SPECTRUM/MSX1/MSX2/AMSTRAD
- SUPPLIER: INFOGRAMMES
- PRICE: £9.95
- VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM
- REVIEWER: PAUL



A man's head appears in the sights of a gun. A shot is fired. A crimson bullethole appears in his forehead and he slumps to the floor. Sirens begin to wail.

The scene switches. The man lies dead on the pavement, his briefcase by his side.

As a Detective Sergeant in the Crime Squad in the St Etienne (Loire) police you must track down the killer. Yes, this is another murder hunt from the mind of former French policeman Gilles Blancon. It's similar to his previous game, *Vera Cruz*, but this is a touch more sophisticated.

There are two scenes of crime to investigate — the scene around the body of the victim, Mr Sidney, and the room where the shot was fired.

You control a magnifying glass to zoom in on the clues. In the man's wallet you'll find what can best be described as a compromising photograph. Could this be a reason for the killing?

In the room there are more clues to be had — a fingerprint and bullet cartridge, for instance.

Once you have discovered all of the clues you move on to the second part of the game where you can interview witnesses and suspects and use the police Diamond Network Computer.

This enables you to communicate with other police services, justice departments, prison administrations and the National Police.

Unlike *Vera Cruz*, in the *Sidney Affair* you can interview people, providing you can find them, more than once. For instance, Witness A will tell you something. But it is only when Witness B provides you with information that you can use this to get more out of Witness A.

You can compare an alibi or other evidence of one person with certain facts collected during the investigation. But this comparison can only be carried out on the basis of a statement. You can also carry out different examinations for example a ballistic or autopsy.

Once you are certain of someone's guilt, it only remains for you to make an arrest.

The only thing I don't like about *The Sidney Affair* is the title. It sounds like an Australian love-match. Apart from that, it's a highly entertaining game.

Right. In the grand tradition of the whodunit I will reveal the murderer right at the end of this review. Oh no! Don't say I'm going to run out of space! The murderer was . . .

▶ GRAPHICS	7
▶ SOUND	6
▶ VALUE	8
▶ PLAYABILITY	9

C+VG HIT!



EQUALISER + TERMINATOR

- MACHINE: C64
- SUPPLIER: POWERHOUSE
- PRICE: £1.99
- REVIEWER: TIM

Who's a little sneaky software house then? Getting a version of *Wonder Boy*, called *Equaliser* that arcade oddity, out before the official version hits the shelves. Still, at just £1.99 it's a great debut for a new budget label, Powerhouse.

Equaliser has been written for Powerhouse by Gavin Raeburn who is obviously into arcade games in a big way 'cos he says one of his new projects will be a version of Tony Takoushi's fave game *I, Robot*.

Still, back to *Equaliser*, which isn't anything to do with that awful TV show of the same name. In fact the star of this computer version is a lot younger than the pensioner who wobbles around the streets of New York on TV. In fact his favourite streetwear appears to be an oversized nappy. But enough of these fashion notes, on with the game. Which is pretty nifty really.

It's a scrolling platform style of game with a nice driving soundtrack and pretty graphics. Basically you have to guide the *Equaliser* through a series of scenarios, fighting off nasties and leaping chasms, all in search of your captured girlfriend.

You can zap the nasties — but don't let them gang up on you — and watch out for the flying birds who drop rocks in later screens.

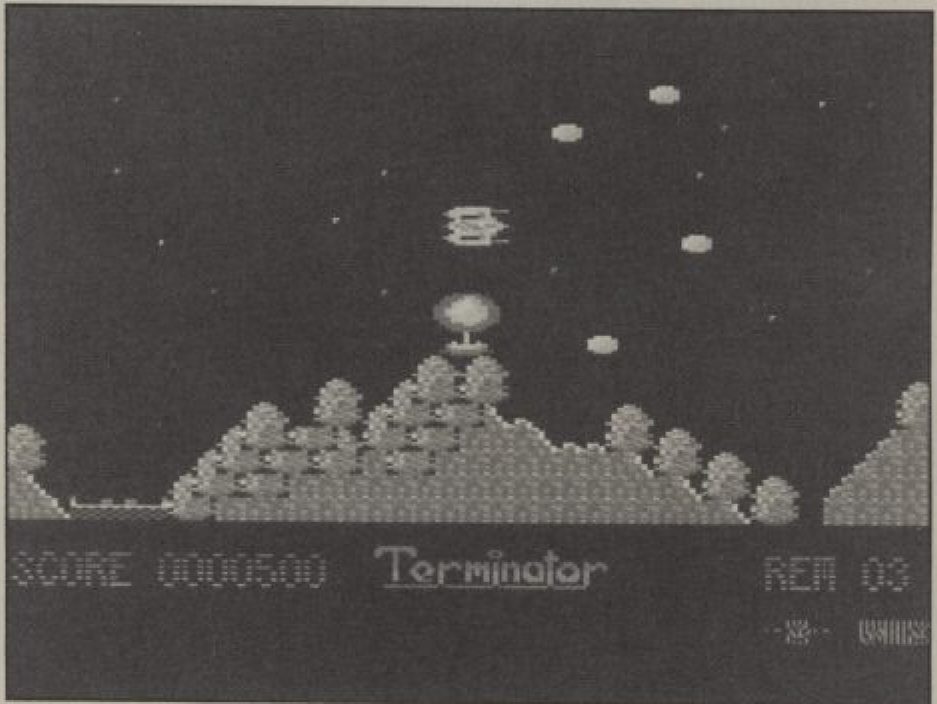
Reminded me a bit of *Ghosts n' Goblins* without the horror element. *Equaliser* is a really playable game, great value at this price.

Which can't really be said of Gavin's other offering *Terminator*. This is a *Uridium* clone without the slickness of the C+VG game of the year. Once again it's a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up with a *Scramble*-type landscapes. The alien nasties are pretty fast moving — which is why you need the joystick response to be a bit faster than it is. This really spoils what could be a nice cheapo blaster.

Again graphics and sound are good and there are some *Uridium* style frills — like the fruit-machine type sub-game and the scrolling intro screens.

Equaliser is the best of these two offerings by far. Well worth a couple of quid of anyone's money. And you get an audio track after the games — some synthesised house music. Turn down the computer and groove along to these sounds instead!

Equaliser/Terminator		
▶ Graphics	7	7
▶ Sound	7	7
▶ Value	8	7
▶ Playability	8	6



MICRO TRIVIA

- MACHINE: AMSTRAD PCW 8256/8512
- SUPPLIER: HAROLD GALE ASSOCIATES
- PRICE: £7.77
- VERSION TESTED: DISK
- REVIEWER: DAVID BISHOP

Another trivia game, this time borrowing the noughts and crosses principal of getting a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal line of three correct answers. *Micro Trivia* is for one player only, a dangerous limitation for any game of this type as one of the prime attractions of trivia games is that they give a group of people the chance to show off to each other just how smart they are (or aren't).

At the start of the game you are invited to set the timer at anything between one and 20 seconds. This determines how long you have to answwer each question, but it wasn't clear if you could get a better score using a shorter time limit.

Once the timer is set, a three times three matrix of nine squares appears. Select your question by typing a number between one and nine (each relating to one of the nine squares). Each question is accompanied by four answers, one of which is correct.

Your score is not shown until you have made a line. Each answer you get right gives you a plus score while wrong answers score minus points.

The number of points scored depends on the speed with which you answer. When it becomes impossible to make a winning line, the game is unceremoniously bought to a premature end and your embarassingly puny score will be displayed. The game comes with a 1,000 'pot luck' questions of varying difficulty. Further disks, each with 1,000 more questions on specific subjects, are advertised in the instructions. Subjects include sport, soaps, TV and music.

Micro Trivia is a nice variation on the trivia theme but, with only 1,000 questions on the disk and a similar number on each of the add ons, there must be cheaper ways of discovering the level of your mental agility.

▶ GRAPHICS	NA
▶ SOUND	NA
▶ VALUE	5
▶ PLAYABILITY	7

C+VG REVIEWS 15

SHORTS

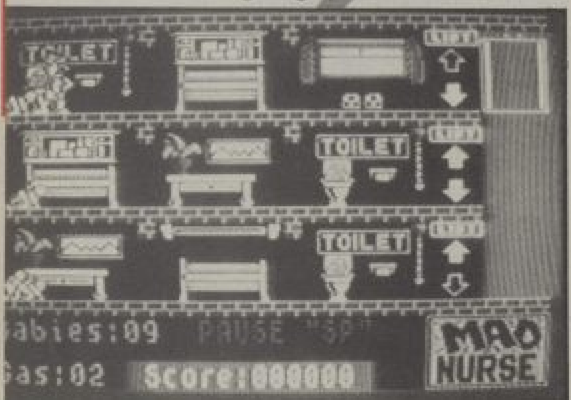
MAD NURSE

▶ MACHINE: SPECTRUM
▶ SUPPLIER: FIREBIRD
▶ PRICE: £1.99
▶ REVIEWER: PAUL

This game should be taken into council care. It needs help. Dead babies for entertainment. Wonderful.

Mad Nurse is set in a maternity hospital crawling with little bundles of joy. Trainee nurses apear to be in control of the place. These would-be Florence Nightingales delight in such names as Nina Nightnurse and Brenda Bumwasher. Humour isn't dead even if the babies are.

The babies refuse to stay put and go to sleep. They crawl all over the place, swigging from medicine bottles, apparently electrocuting themselves and — wait for it — this is the really clever — falling down a liftshaft and going splat at the bottom.



Controlling the nurse you must round - up the babies before harm befalls them, put them in bed and collecting stray medicine bottles. Points are scored for babies saved.

During a game you have three nurses, each of which is allowed three mishaps before getting the sack.

I think this game is probably the sickest game I've ever played. Don't buy it.

▶ GRAPHICS	4
▶ SOUND	5
▶ VALUE	4
▶ PLAYABILITY	3

MUNCHER

▶ MACHINE: AMSTRAD CPC 464, 664, and 6128
▶ SUPPLIER: BUBBLE BUS
▶ PRICE: £1.99
▶ VERSION TESTED: AMSTRAD TAPE
▶ REVIEWER: DAVID

Continuing its aptly named 'Mini Bus' line of budget games, Bubble Bus has released yet another version of that old classic *Pacman*. This one, called *Muncher*, has all the elements of the original including food, ghoul pills, and bonus fruits which make the ghouls flash during which time you can get them.

There is a different maze design for each level. They become progressively harder to complete as the ghouls move faster and flash for less time when you eat the pills.

Control is with keyboard or joystick and can be redefined, if the default ones don't suit. *Muncher* has sound effects of a budget nature but nothing to get excited about.

If there really is somebody out there who hasn't already played *Pacman* to death, then this is for you. Otherwise keep your £1.99 as there are plenty of excellent budget offerings around that are not of antique origin.

▶ GRAPHICS	4
▶ SOUND	4
▶ VALUE	5
▶ PLAYABILITY	6

BUTCH HARDGUY

▶ MACHINES: SPECTRUM
▶ SUPPLIER: ADVANCE SOFTWARE
▶ PRICE: £7.95
▶ REVIEWER: PAUL

Hi, I'm Butch. *Butch Hard Guy*. Rough, tough and ready to duff anybody up. My motto? "Who Cares Who Wins."

Obviously *Butch Hard Guy* is intended to be a funny take off of Rambo and the many other macho tough guys. The humour, however, stops at the cassette cover and blurb. What we have is a rather straightforward platform and ladders game.

The evil Dr Tie Fu (Is that a joke? Typhoo?) is holding captive soldiers. These are scattered around the 20 screens held in cages. And an army of near indestructible droids patrol Dr Fu's South Pacific Island.

Butch only has his hands, feet and your wits to help him triumph. The droids proved instant death for me.

But, apparently, if you punch them in the middle they sit down and switch off for a second. To destroy them Butch has to punch them in the face and then get as far away from them as possible because they explode.

To free the prisoners, Butch has to punch and kick furiously at the bars of their cages. Once free the race off towards a rescue helicopter. If they encounter a droid they end up back in their cage.

Butch Hard Guy is fun but really not different enough to set the world on fire. It would have been better as a budget game. You do, however, get a free *Butch Hard Guy* badge with the game. Wow!

▶ GRAPHICS	7
▶ SOUND	6
▶ VALUE	5
▶ PLAYABILITY	6

PLAN B

▶ MACHINES: BBC/ELECTRON
▶ SUPPLIER: BUG-BYTE
▶ PRICE: £2.99
▶ VERSION TESTED: BBC
▶ REVIEWER: NICKY

Oh no, I thought when this latest effort from Bug-Byte dropped through the letterbox. More nasty Mode two-type graphics, sluggish sprites and poor screen response to grapple with.

But I was wrong. At least, Bug-Byte has come up with the goods, *Plan B* might not be epic arcade action, but in terms of graphics it's a million times better than anything else I've seen from the Bug-Byte stable.

The scenario is simple. You control a war drone who must destroy the rogue central computer inside the Togrian computer complex, fighting off the guards in the process. You must find the keys which open the doors in the complex, and finally make your escape.

And it's slick! It's lively! Above all, it's fast! Even the sound tends to add to the excitement.

You lose energy and ammo as you battle your way through the game, but both can be recouped. The complex is like a huge maze, in design vaguely reminiscent of *Repton*, but none the worse for that. There's a high score table so you can measure your progress.

Plan B is a lightweight game but it's fun to play, and very classy compared to previous Bug/Byte offerings. Definitely worth it at £2.99.

▶ GRAPHICS	8
▶ SOUND	7
▶ VALUE	8
▶ PLAYABILITY	8

AGENT ORANGE

▶ MACHINE: SPECTRUM 48,128,128+/COMMODORE/AMSTRAD
▶ SUPPLIER: A'n'F
▶ PRICE: £9.95
▶ VERSION REVIEWED: SPECTRUM
▶ REVIEWER: LEE

This game has a very unusual plot. You've got to save the entire universe from a gang of evil aliens. Original, eh? These aliens are planting Triffid-type weeds, that destroy your crops on eight planets. To stop this happening, you must fly to the final planet, and collect a cargo of alien weedkiller, codenamed Agent Orange.

You start with one mothership, and eight daughter vessels, but if you play well, you can sell any successful crops, and buy better ships from your home planet. When you arrive at a planet, you must blast any aliens that are trying to plant more deadly seeds, and so stop the decaying of any valuable crops. When you fly over fertile soil with the fire button depressed, a seed is planted, and if it reaches a ripe stage, it can be picked.

I'm sorry to say, but this is almost as bad as *Wibstars*, also from A'n' F. The screen is neither flick screen, nor scrolling, it's a sort of mixture of both. The screen stays stationary, but then scrolls to the next area. Very weird, and very infuriating, especially if







there's an alien who's ready to shoot you on the next screen. The scrolling, what there is, is very jerky, even for the humble Speccy, and the sound is well below average, even on the 128 Spectrum.

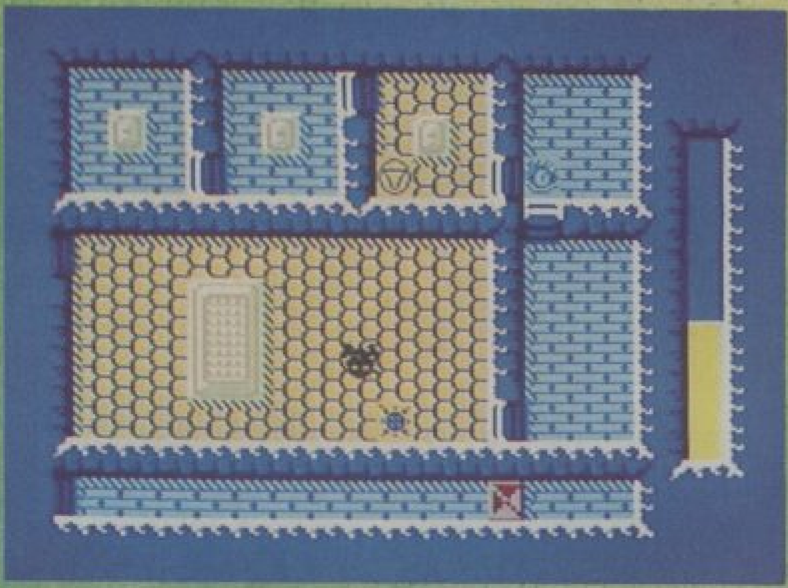
The graphics are bland, and mainly black and white with only the odd bit of colour, and nearly all the planets look the same. Basically, it's not a brilliant game, in fact, A 'n' F hasn't produced a really good game since *Chuckie Egg*.

▶ GRAPHICS	4
▶ SOUND	3
▶ VALUE	3
▶ PLAYABILITY	3

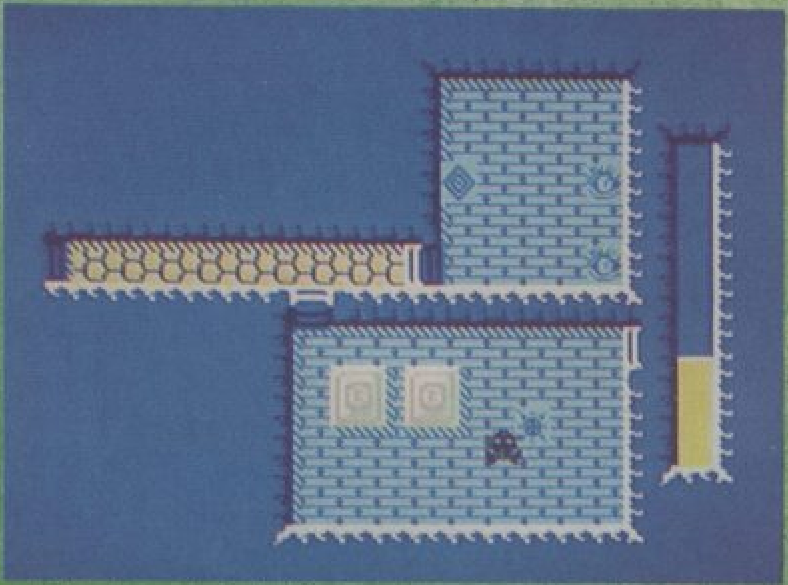
Steve Turner's RANA



RanaRama is all set to rocket programmer Steve Turner and Hewson high into the software charts. Here C+VG presents Steve's exclusive hints and help for troubled gamesters. It's straight from the horse's mouth . . .



▲ The frog and a screenful of rooms. C64 version



▲ Is this a dead end? The frog in a flap.

In *RanaRama* you control Mervyn, a sorcerer's apprentice, a survivor of an invasion of alien warlocks.

He managed to evade capture as he had inadvertently transformed himself into a frog whilst trying to concoct a potion to make himself tall, handsome and muscular.

You have to tackle 12 wizards per level who are guarded by troops scattered over the 50 to 100 rooms on each level. The view of the rooms is from above with five or so to a screen. A room does not become illuminated until you visit it.

Once you reach a wizard, you tackle him in sub-games which require lightening reactions.

The game is basically a shoot 'em-up, where the nasties are continually generated to give a continuous action feel. There are eight levels of missiles, eight levels of power and eight types of shield for you to accumulate and use. The easiest way to accumulate items is to defeat wizards to win their runes and then convert the runes into the items you require.

The missiles, power and shields are all graded and the nasties on the later levels are graded too.

Spell items can also be obtained randomly in certain rooms at spell points.

THE MAGIC MINIONS

The creatures you can expect to find — or who will find you.

Dwarf Warrior: First level fighter. Not very intelligent, likes gold, drink and fighting.

Fire Gollum: Second level fighter. Provides light and warmth in the dark and dingy depths.

Bisect: Third level fighter. Formidable warriors protected by their exoskeletons.

Guardian: Fourth level fighter. Protected by magic and resist magical attacks by lesser creatures.

Death Serpent: Fifth level fighter. Fast and deadly.

Ghoul: Sixth level fighter. These are almost invisible and will drain energy from the living.

Arachnae: Seventh level fighter. Man-eating spiders who have a taste for frogs.

Gargoyle: Eighth level fighter. Fast, cunning and very evil.

Warlock: Found on levels one to four. Will only attack you if your status is less than theirs. Otherwise they will run. Best defeated by magical combat rather than missiles.

Necromancer: Levels five to eight. Steer clear unless you have a Power level four and high shield spell.

MAGICAL WEAPONS

Munching Mouth: Hide or run.

Spinning Knives: Slow but can attack in great numbers.

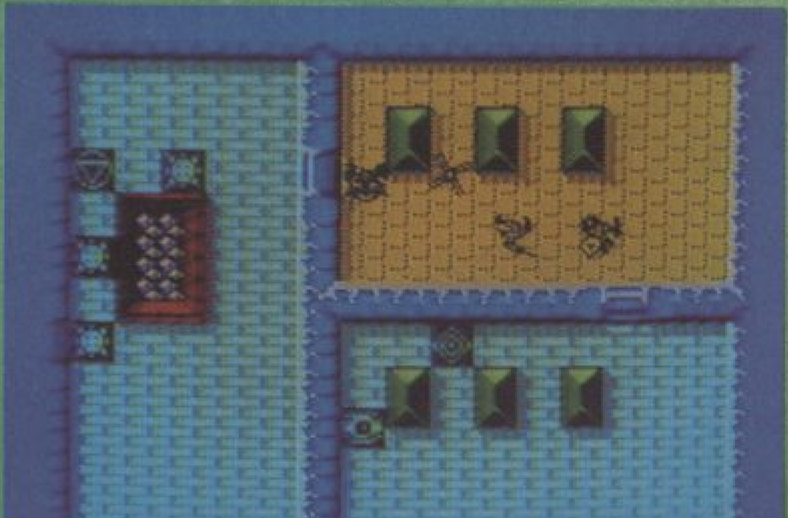
Orbitor: Four steel balls rotating around a ball of energy. Slow enough to shoot.

Energy Ball: Pure energy.

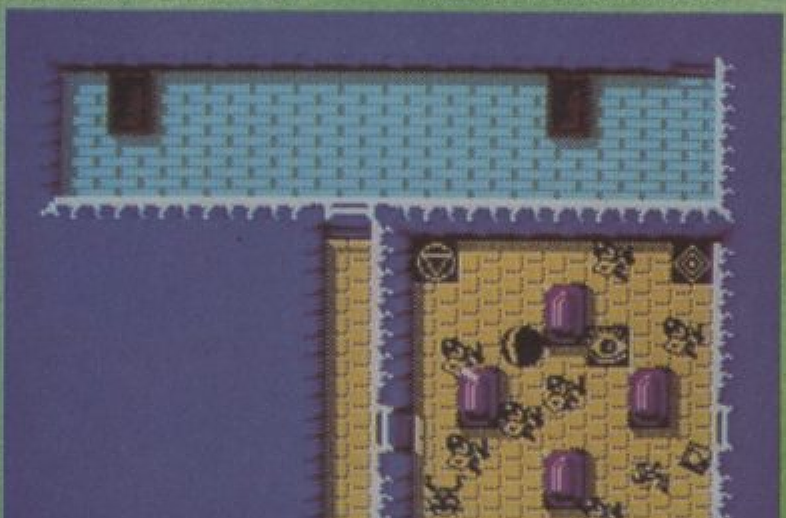
HOW TO SURVIVE

When you are underpowered to tackle a level remember discretion is the better part of valour.

Move quickly from room to room avoiding trouble. Pick up any energy crystals you find but remember your



▲ Under attck in the Spectrum version.



▲ Is the frog in trouble here or what?

RAMA

Player's Guide

survival depends on locating the warlocks and winning their magic.

At the start of a level many doors will be hidden so have the FIND spell ready. Later when you have explored most of the level use the SEE spell and the map to locate the remaining warlocks. Remember they move about intelligently so on your way to them check their position.

A quick test to see if you have a powerful enough attack spell for a level is to shoot an object that initiates the magical attack weapons.

If the object can be destroyed in one shot you have a good chance of clearing the level and can go on the offensive blasting everything in sight. If more than one shot is needed use the evasive tactics described above. If three of four shots are needed exit the level to an easier one.

MEANIES

Learn to recognise the meanies as there are eight types. Wounding a powerful meany will anger him and make him very aggressive. Badly wounding a meany will stop him or make him panic. Only take on the meanies if your attack spell can destroy in one or two shots. Run from the rest.

MAGICAL WEAPONS

If you enter a room with a small scenery object, magical attack weapons will appear around it. Either destroy the object or exit the room. There are no points for destroying the attack weapons and they are quite deadly.

If there are many initiators in a room, say a line of coffins, the best place to stand is at the end of the line so the attack

GLYPHS OF POWER

Use these to attack all meanies in a room. Do not use them if a warlock is in the room as you may destroy him, losing the chance to win his runes.

In the deeper levels use Glyphs of Power with care as they may just annoy everyone in the room so they all attack you at once!

WARLOCKS

Before you tackle them, clear the room of other meanies so you have a good chance of picking up the runes. Try to tackle the warlock in a small room or a corner so the runes cannot go far. When you chase the runes take care not to accidently leave the room or they disappear.

MAGIC GAME

This is a lot easier than it seems at first. Concentrate on one letter of the word at a time and sort it to its place. I usually start with the M or the N as they are easy to find. Some people find it easier to start with the first letter R and sort out the letters one at a time left to right. You only have to place about three letters. The rest usually fall in to place on there own.

There is no time to think, do not try to unravel the word in your head just pick a letter and keep that fire button and joystick moving. You will soon get the knack of moving one letter right across the word by co-ordinating firing and joystick. The joystick must be centred between moves so a typical move may require left, left, left to place the cursor over the required pair of letters fire right fire right fire right fire to move the letter four places.

USING YOUR RUNES

If you are MORTAL use whatever runes you have to fire up a power spell or your life energy will drain away ending the game.

It is wise to fire up another energy spell if you can whenever the frog starts flashing croaking and looking very miserable. They you will avoid being MORTAL and being transported to a random room where it may be difficult to find a Glyph of Magic to replenish your spell.

Try to balance your spells taking note of your drain shown on the spell screen. If it shows anything other than minimum your power spell is not really high enough for all the other spells running.

Use runes sparingly, it is not a big advantage using high level power or shields until you need them.

When you tackle a new level be sure to reequip unless you have already done so in clcearing the previous level. To stand a chance on a level you need power attack and defence spells of the same level.

Levels are numbered in increasing difficulty left to right then top to bottom. The shield spells are essential on the lower levels to reduce damage. Without them a single hit is fatal.

OVERALL STRATEGY

It pays to clear the levels one at a time in order of difficulty. To get maximum points destroy all meanies before eliminating the lat warlock on a level. When you leave a level without warlocks their minions will disappear.

Try to end each level with enough runes to give you a chance at the next level. This may mean leaving meanies alive. Only spend extra time annihilating a level if you have the spare runes to do so.

PORGRAMME PROFILE

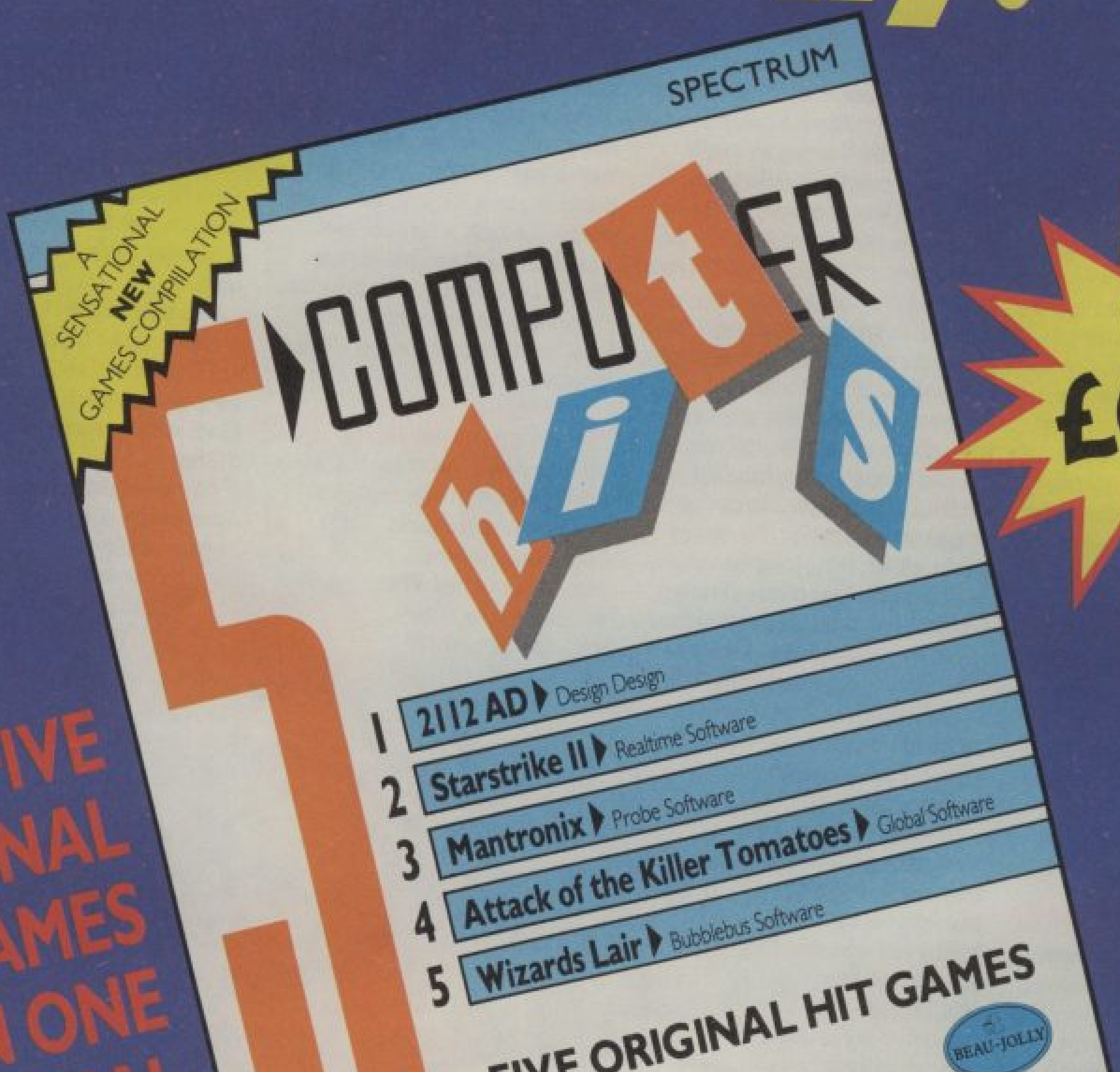
Steve Turner is the man behind a whole array of top ten hits for Hewson including *Dragontorc*, *Avalon*, *Astro-Clone* and *Quzatron*.

In his early thirties, Steve has been programming for 17 years. He attended one of the first schools to have its own computer club which allowed him to use a computer with a 512 bytes.

After leaving school Steve continued to utilise his programming prowess both at work in the Civil Service and at home on his first computer, an old style ZX80. He eventually gave up job to concentrate on games programming.



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I.D.E.A.S CENTRAL



After many many pleas, Jerry Paris has been persuaded to create a Melissa poster, which you will find in the middle pages. The fame of being a centrefold pin-up shall not go to my head! I would like to take this opportunity to wish farewell to Hannah Smith of *Crash* — in the past we may have had our differences, but, friendly rivalry never did anyone harm. Meanwhile please keep sending your hints and help to I.D.E.A.S Central.

SENTINEL

Darren Seyck of Enfield reckons that The Sentinel — which won C+VG Golden Joystick for Best Original Game — is one of the hardest games he has come across but with a little bit of patience and the hints he gives here you should be able to enjoy a truly enjoyable game.

The first 10 levels are very easy as there are no sentries. Throughout the levels there is a very curious sentry-numbering systems. Although there is one sentry on levels 0012, 0169 and 202 there are 4 of them and the Sentinel on level 0115.

On with the tips. Always try and gain as much energy as possible before absorbing the Sentinel. The more energy, the further you go and the less levels you have to complete. If you find yourself constantly being absorbed before you can properly move from the starting position, go in the most unexpected direction.

On level 0220 there are three sentries and they all look at you within two turns. Have a few goes to find out how long you have before being spotted. Use this information to try all the possible ways you can go. and you don't always have to absorb your previous robot either. If you find that a move to a higher ledge can only be achieved, without being spotted by not absorbing your last robot then don't. As long as you don't go too far away you will only have lost a couple of energy when you take them back instead of being dead.

If you find there is a level, that although you've tried really hard and you still can't do it, go back to the previous level and gain more energy to hyperspace over the offending level.

There are occasions when you will hear the ominous low clicking sound made by a meanie. Don't try and look for it. It takes time to turn 360 degrees that you will be hyperspaced long before you find him. Instead, as soon as you see the half bar in the top right of the screen move your robot as far away as possible, preferably onto higher square, so when you look towards the previous robot you will see the meanie. Absorb it quickly though, because it will quickly turn into a tree. When you absorb a sentry place your robot on the square where it was. You should now be able to absorb most of the other sentries, for they are normally on the same level. Always absorb all the sentries before absorbing the Sentinel. If you don't then you won't be able to complete the level.

On later levels the only way to get the Sentinel is by stacking two or three boulders. This is wasteful on your energy. So before absorbing the Sentinel turn round and get all the trees you can see. For the first few levels' the Sentinel and sentries only decrease your energy by one point (tree). But somewhere around the 30th level mark, the Sentinels have a greater power. They first take one point and subsequently take three points (robot) at a time. But when you absorb a tree and make a tree symbol in the score line he takes just one point and then continues to take three.

As far as Darren knows the Sentinel only does this, the sentries take just one energy point at a time. Once you have mastered the art of disposing of a land Don't forget that if you want to absorb or create energy on top of a boulder the cross hair need not move from the side of the boulder.

This is a time saving movement — as you can transfer without waiting for the very slow scrolling. The cross hair is a nuisance. Don't switch it on unless you are creating or absorbing. Without it on, the scrolling is slightly faster. Moving from robot to robot is pointless unless you move higher.

EMPEROR'S SECRET SERVICE

So sensitive was the information contained in On the Emperor's Secret Service listing published in January's C+VG that evil forces conspired to place a bug in the program.

Star Dreams, the game programmers, says the strange graphic which appears in several places like a bracket should be a #, as in line 4500 which should read PRINT#0.

Star Dreams also forgot to include a DATA program which enables OTESS to LOAD a map.

```
CLS : PRINT AT 10,7; FLASH 1;" SETTING UP DATA ": FLASH 0
DIM A$(5,256): RESTORE : LET T=0
FOR X=1 TO 5: LET A$(X, TO 16)="1111111111111111": LET A$(X,241 TO )=A$(X,
): NEXT X
FOR X=17 TO 240: READ B$: FOR Y=1 TO 5: LET A$(Y,X)=B$(Y): LET T=T+CODE B$(
NEXT Y: NEXT X
CLS
IF T<>56578 THEN PRINT AT 10,9; FLASH 1;" DATA ERROR ": STOP
SAVE "MAP" DATA A$()
PRINT '''''"REWIND TAPE AND PLAY BACK FOR   VERIFICATION"
VERIFY "MAP" DATA A$()
PRINT ''"VERIFICATION O.K."

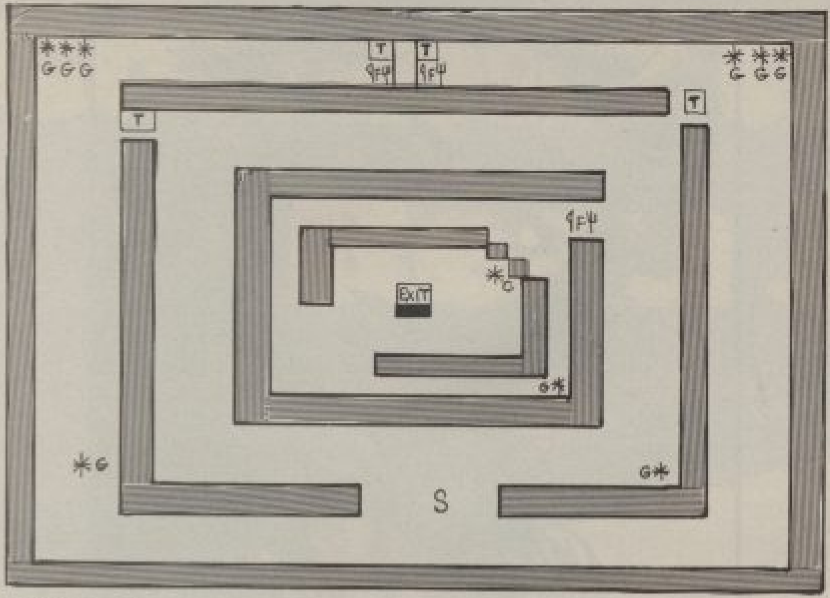
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DATA "21222","22512","11H22","125L2"
DATA "11222","2212H","55511","11522"
DATA "22102","22522","225H1","11111"
DATA "11111","11KIN","22221","LL21/"
DATA "21L22","22221","00M21","22211"
DATA "00L21","LL021","55201","14222"
DATA "22111","HHL12","22211","11111"
DATA "11111","1H022","12122","02112"
DATA "11112","11212","11212","22212"
DATA "11222","11122","11M10","11MM2"
DATA "22001","22222","22L.1","11111"
DATA "11111","52221","22211","222/1"
DATA "21220","25121","00121","22101"
DATA "00121","5:221","11221","11222"
DATA "11111","1021L","01211","11111"

DATA "11111","51122","20122","21/12"
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DATA "22111","12L22","22221","11111"
DATA "1/111","12+-5","12222","12215"
DATA "22112","22115","02112","22115"
DATA "02LN2","21121","22011","K1122"
DATA "22111","120N2","22121","11111"
DATA "11111","21122","20122","01212"
DATA "M1222","11222","11222","10202"
DATA "11222","112L2","12210","11222"
DATA "11211","11222","2L22+","11111"
DATA "11111","22125","22112","12225"
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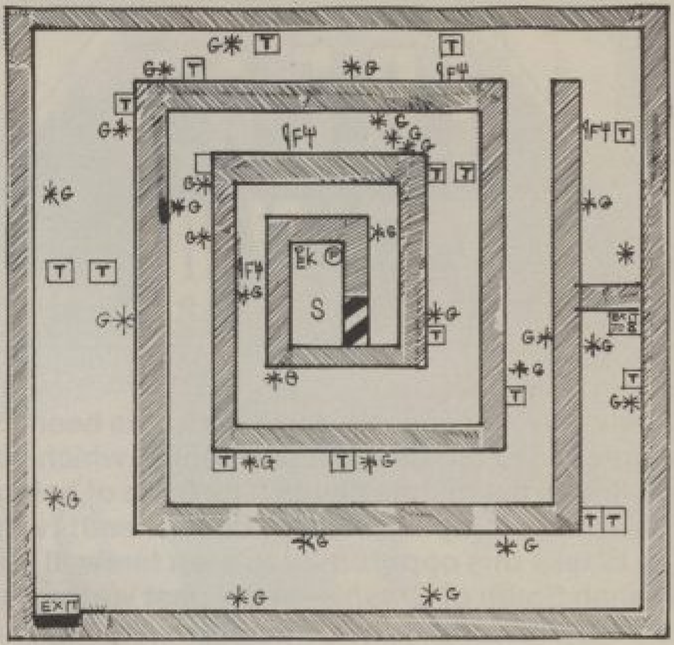
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DATA "11111","22115","22122","12115"
DATA "H2222","L2225","02122","22205"
DATA "0L222","21221","51211","51122"
DATA "32201","11122","21221","11111"
DATA "11111","22222","21222","11212"
DATA "21222","21212","11212","22212"
DATA "12112","L2112","22210","22222"
DATA "22211","12122","22221","11111"
DATA "11111","22225","21112","11225"
DATA "11222","11115","11122","01122"
DATA "11122","11121","11101","11122"
DATA "11111","11122","22221","11111"
DATA "11111","22222","22122","22122"
DATA "22122","22102","22122","22122"
DATA "22122","22121","22111","22122"
DATA "22111","2212L","21221","11111"
DATA "/1111","22225","2L212","22225"
DATA "22212","21215","22222","22215"
DATA "222H2","22222","22210","22122"
DATA "2+-12","22222","21222","11111"
STOP
```

You'll find that program should now work.

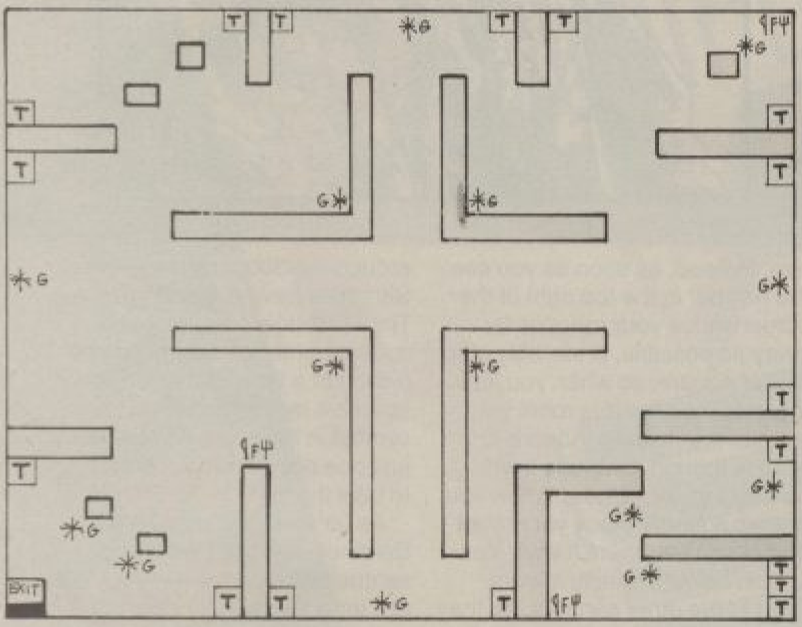
GAUNTLET ● GAUNTLET ● GAUNTLET



LEVEL 5



LEVEL 4



LEVEL 6

Here, as promised, are the next 3 levels of Gauntlet from Danny Blackman. This game by US Gold was yet another winner in the Golden Joystick Awards — picking up Game of the Year and runner up in Arcade Game of the Year.

MSX ● MSX

Here are some hints for MSX games from a regular reader of this column — Guy Langley. Look out for Guy's name elsewhere in the magazine as he is going to start reviewing the MSX games we receive in the office.

Trailblazer — alway move at top speed, and use the jump squares to leap rather than your own jump. On the screens that include the world 'Shaun' move to the right, and try to get up a steady rhythm of bounces. Beware of the two green patches on 'woolly jumper'. Always save at least one bounce for the second patch, and don't use them all up on the first.

On Hackers Evil Holes use the white squares as though they are surrounded by normal ones. When you are stuck on the cyan patches that reverse controls, steer towards the black squares and you will finish miraculously unscathed. also beware of levels H, L and K. Guy warns that these are real killers.

Valkyr — on the first levels don't try to shoot the diving firing droners. Try for the ones that get stuck and spin. It is also a good idea to clear the skies of motherships these take three blasts and when destroyed release three or four xeryllium (!) pods on explosion. By the way, to detonate the bomb, it is CAPS on the keyboard and not pull the joystick back.

Cyberun — collect first the two rocket boosters that are close to the starting point and then go to collect the rocket launcher — invaluable for exploration into caves.

ATARI ● ATARI

More for the Atari — this time from Jonathan French of Norfolk. First of all Warhawk — after level 4, during an attack of alien craft occasionally a flashing alien different to the others will appear. Just fire one shot at it, and it will transform into a flashing spring shaped craft. Move your ship to dock with it, and you will find your firepower will increase giving you a better chance of clearing the later difficult levels.

On the same game, if you are very lucky an alien ship will suddenly appear next to your ship This will cause no aliens to attack you, until the end of level. Don't move near it though, as more often than not it will disappear.

Bounty Bob Strikes Back — Load the game as normal. Then press the option key for the game adjustment section. Change the special code to 61,800. Then press F key and Option together. Start the game as normal, but if you press any of the following keys you will have various effects. Q — advance 1 level. A — down 1 level. F — toggles 'float mode' on/off when on, it allows you to move anywhere on the screen. Pressing a combination of keys will warp you to the screen ie 2 then 3 takes you to screen 23 or 0 then 5 takes you to level 5.

ATARI ST ●

Roger Wyatt is the first reader to send in tips for the ST and they are for World Games.

Weightlifting — with the snatch Roger is a bit stumped, but with the clean and jerk he's got it down to a T. Grip the bar, then pull forward to start the lift, as the bar reaches your man's chest pull back. Then wait for your man to breath in and out twice. At the end of the last breath pull forward and then wait again for the same amount of time as before. Pull back to jerk the bar over your man's head. Wait once more for a full breath and then straighten your legs and you should get a full 225.

Cliff Diving — to get a high score drive straight for as long as possible and land in deep water.

Logrolling — if you start the log rolling as soon as you start the game you can throw your opponent with no problem.

Caber Tossing — to get up speed move your joystick twice as fast as your mans legs. Go faster and faster until your log starts to go back behind you. Keep going until the log straightens out, then begin your throw. Wait until the log is at an angle of 60°, then flip your log.

BOMBJACK II ● BOMBJACK II ●

Bombjack II hints and tips from C+VG Readers Software House of the Year — Elite.

Survival Tips — timing is very important, especially when Bombjack must jump into a short platform with a monster on. Time it so that Bombjack gets on when there is plenty of space then either push the monster off or jump to another platform quickly. Often you can jump onto a platform and straight off again without losing energy to the nasty. On later levels this is necessary as the nasties are sometimes on very short platforms and thus cannot be pushed off. Pushing the nasties off tends to use up a lot of energy so it is best to wait for a nasty to get near the end of a platform so Bombjack does not have to push him very far. Repeatedly stabbing the nasty will kill him off twice as quick.

Only try to attack one nasty at a time and be especially careful he doesn't push back to push you off. Watch out as the nasties get stronger and then more intelligent — you will have little chance of killing them unless you have a full tank of energy. Don't kill nasties on your 'start' platform as they will simply reappear and push you off.

If a lot of nasties gather around the last sack, it pays to wait for them to turn into jumping meanies so they move off the platform letting you get the sack. It pays to hurry up and get off each screen before the nasties begin to jump. If they start jumping, keep moving and above all don't panic.

At first the meanies will jump around aimlessly and will not home in on you giving you some time to pick up the remaining sacks and get off the screen. If however you hang around long enough for the nasties to mutate again, they will become intelligent and start to home in. Escape from these is nearly impossible, so try to clear the screen before they get to this stage.

When it comes to scoring the best tip is to collect as many open sacks as possible. When you get a sack, another will open showing you which to get next. On getting that one, yet another one will open.

Open sacks score you 200 instead of the normal 100 but if you collect six or more you will receive a bonus of between 5,000 and 25,000. Collecting all 10 gives you another extra life.

As for strategy tips, the best bit of advice here is to get used to the screens and what platforms you can leap between. This is important as you won't have time to stop and think where to leap to next. Know them off by heart as some of the routes are hard to find. If you have to stop and think you could become stuck. Try to work out the sack order on each screen as all those extra lives will improve your scores. The secret is to find out which sack to get first — choose the wrong one and you will not be able to get the next one without picking a sack out of order. After a little trial and error you will find the right one and then use your arcade skill to get the others. Be careful when rushing about not to over-step the platform and get a sack out of sequence.

Some screens have special techniques to complete them. Screen 3 is simply run like hell and don't bother about order. Many later screens are difficult to clear correctly, but very easy without bothering with the order.

There are two sorts of screens with special techniques — on some screens there is only one route around them. First go one way to pick up a sack then backtrack to pick up the next sack then the other way around. Try not to get dizzy.



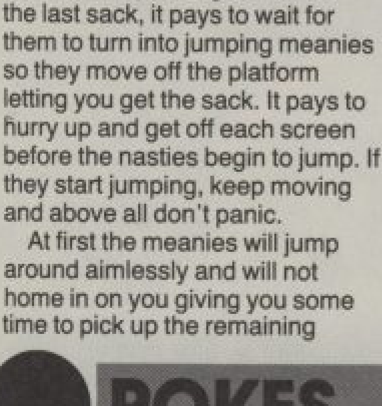
Another Elite game to be given the low down is Paperboy. Carl Brunt of Notts is the man behind this tip which will enable you to achieve maximum bonus points on the C64 version.

When you start the game do not fire at any graves, dustbins etc. Just at mailboxes. When you get the fifth house post their paper, drop one in the bird table and then smash their window — in that order. Then in the top right of the screen the number 99 should appear. When it does, do not shoot any graves, dustbins etc or it will just revert back to zero.

Then at the end of the BMX course you should gain an extra 9900 points. Works only on Mondays and Fridays.

POKES ● POKES

John Skinner of Southend on Sea sent in this poke for Space Harrier along with a picture of himself enjoying a drink in Ibiza. Load in your Space Harrier cassette and then reset your 64 and enter these pokes. Poke 2213,255. Poke 8110,0. Then Sys 2128. This makes the game a lot easier by getting rid of all the poles and also wiping out level 3 completely — which is the hardest.



Bad printing in the C+VG February Book of Games has caused a few problems on the listing for the Mega Elite Commander for the BBC. Line 520 should read T%=20—(LEN (S$) DIV 2)—1

And Line 700 is DATA "80003178000000"

In Pontoon

Line 14120 reads mt=0:ifct <16thenmt=1

All the listings work but some people are having difficulty. Remember just one mistake can destroy the program. So check carefully.

And now for Touchdown on the Spectrum. The graphics did not print out in the Book of Games. Here are the relevant lines which contain graphics. Hopefully everything should run properly.

SPECTRUM ●

```
1035 PRINT AT 21,25; PAPER 1; IN
K 6;p$(p TO p+5): PRINT AT 16,0;
 INK ink;"                              "

2015 LET a$="
CH     TOU
IN     DOW
"

2050 BORDER 2: FOR f=0 TO 29: PR
INT AT 15,f; INK 6;" ": BEEP .
01,-20: PRINT AT 15,0; INK 7;a$(
 TO f+1): NEXT f: PRINT AT 15,29
;"  "

4020 DATA "YOU CAN GAIN EXTRA FU
EL BY","DOCKING WITH ONE OF THE
FLOATING","FUEL PODS( )."," ","ON HI
GHER SKILL LEVELS YOU GAIN","EXT
RA POINTS BY RESCUING","ASTRONAU
TS( )."," ","CONTROLS: 5-LEFT  7-RI
GHT"," ","6-DOWN  9-UP  0-FIRE",
"(OR USE SINCLAIR INTERFACE 2)"
5000 REM +++data for asteroids++
+
5010 DATA "    ",5,"    ",10,"    ",11,"    ",14
5020 DATA "    ",3,"    ",4,"    ",9,"    ",12
5030 DATA "    ",1,"    ",3,"    ",13,"    ",14
5040 DATA "    ",5,"    ",6,"    ",9,"    ",10
5050 DATA "    ",1,"    ",7,"    ",13,"    ",15
5060 DATA "    ",6,"    ",7,"    ",12,"    ",15
5070 DATA "    ",2,"    ",11,"    ",12,"    ",14
5080 DATA "    ",4,"    ",5,"    ",11,"    ",12

 63 IF b>=0 AND b<=29 THEN PRIN
T AT a,b; INK 6;" "

 65 PRINT AT 0,f; INK 4;" ":
IF RND>.5 THEN LET f=f-1: IF f
<0 THEN PRINT AT 0,0;" ": LET f
=31

 76 IF score>=(5000*i) THEN LET
 life=life+1: LET i=i+1: FOR f=1
 TO life: PRINT AT 20,25+f; PAPE
R 6; INK 2;" ": NEXT f

 105 LET n=n-1: IF n=31 THEN PRI
NT AT 17,31; INK 7;" ";AT 18,31;
 INK ink;" ": RETURN
 107 IF n=30 THEN PRINT AT 17,30
; INK 7;" ";AT 18,30; INK ink;
"  ": RETURN
 109 IF n=29 THEN PRINT AT 17,29
; INK 7;"  ";AT 18,29; INK ink;
"   ": RETURN
 110 IF n=28 THEN PRINT AT 17,28
; INK 7;"   ";AT 18,28; INK ink;
"    ": RETURN
 111 IF n=27 THEN PRINT AT 17,27
; INK 7;"    ";AT 18,27; INK ink
;"     ": RETURN
 113 IF n=-1 THEN PRINT AT 17,0
; INK 7;"   ";AT 18,0; INK ink;
"    ": RETURN
 115 IF n=-2 THEN PRINT AT 17,0
; INK 7;"  ";AT 18,0; INK ink;
"   ": RETURN
 117 IF n=-3 THEN PRINT AT 17,0;
 INK 7;" ";AT 18,0; INK ink;"
  ": RETURN
 119 IF n=-4 THEN PRINT AT 17,0;
 INK 7;" ";AT 18,0; INK ink;"
 ": RETURN
 120 IF n=-5 THEN PRINT AT 17,0;
" ";AT 18,0; INK ink;" ": LET n=
32: RETURN
 122 PRINT AT 17,n; INK 7;"    "
;AT 18,n; INK ink;"      "

 131 IF b=0 AND (INKEY$="5" OR m
ove=6) THEN LET b=-1: LET dis=1
: LET move=6: PRINT AT a,0; INK 6
;" ";AT a,31; INK 6;" ": GO TO
 140
 133 IF b=-1 AND (INKEY$="5" OR
move=6) THEN LET b=-2: LET move=
6: PRINT AT a,0; INK 6;" ";AT a
,30; INK 6;" ": GO TO 140
 135 IF b=-2 AND (INKEY$="5" OR
move=6) THEN LET b=29: LET dis=0
: LET move=6: PRINT AT a,0;" ";
AT a,29; INK 6;" ": GO TO 140
 137 IF b>0 AND (INKEY$="5" OR m
ove=6) THEN LET b=b-1: LET move=
6: PRINT AT a,b; INK 6;" "
 140 IF b=29 AND (INKEY$="7" OR
move=7) THEN LET b=-1: LET dis=1
: LET move=7: PRINT AT a,29; INK
 6;" ";AT a,0; INK 6;" ": GO T
O 150
 141 IF b=-1 AND (INKEY$="7" OR
move=7) THEN LET b=-2: LET move=
7: PRINT AT a,30; INK 6;" ";AT
a,0; INK 6;" ": GO TO 150
 143 IF b=-2 AND (INKEY$="7" OR
move=7) THEN LET b=0: LET dis=0
: LET move=7: PRINT AT a,30;" ";
AT a,0; INK 6;" ": GO TO 150
 145 IF b<29 AND (INKEY$="7" OR
move=7) THEN LET b=b+1: LET move
=7: PRINT AT a,b-1; INK 6;" "
 150 IF (INKEY$="6" OR move=8) A
ND dis=0 THEN LET a=a+1: LET mov
e=8: PRINT AT a-1,b;"  ";AT a,b
; INK 6;" "
 151 IF a=17 THEN GO TO 300
 153 IF a>0 AND dis=0 AND (INKE
Y$="9" OR move=9) THEN LET a=a-1
: LET move=9: PRINT AT a,b; INK 6
;" ";AT a+1,b;"  "

 221 IF s2<b AND s2<30 THEN LET
s2=s2+1: PRINT AT s1,s2-1; INK 0
;" ";AT s1,s2; INK 5;" ": RETUR
N
 222 IF s2>b AND s2>0 THEN LET s
2=s2-1: PRINT AT s1,s2; INK 5;"
 ";AT s1,s2+2; INK 0;" ": RETURN

 223 IF s1<a AND s1<17 THEN LET
s1=s1+1: PRINT AT s1,s2; INK 5;"
 ";AT s1-1,s2;"  ": RETURN
 224 IF s1>a AND s1>0 THEN LET s
1=s1-1: PRINT AT s1,s2; INK 5;"
 ";AT s1+1,s2;"  ": RETURN

 260 FOR f=n TO 28: PRINT AT 16,
f; INK 6;" ": BEEP .01,-20: P
AUSE 3: NEXT f: PRINT AT 16,29;
INK 6;" ": BEEP .01,-20: PRINT
 AT 16,30; INK 6;" ": BEEP .01,
-20: PRINT AT 16,31;"  "

 480 PRINT AT 2,5;"TOUCHDOWN HAL
L OF FAME": FOR f=1 TO 29: PRINT
AT 0,f; INK 5;" ": BEEP .01,10
: PAUSE 5: IF f=24 THEN PRINT AT
 1,26;"E": PAUSE 3: PRINT AT 2,2
6;"E";AT 1,26;" ": PAUSE 3
```

JON RITMAN AND BERNIE DRUMMOND PRESENT DOUBLE TROUBLE...



ENTHRALLING*COMICAL*DAZZLING

Hi! My name's Mr. Head. Some say I'm the one with the brains but I don't think my flat footed friend would agree. I'm a real sharp shooter, but without my pal Mr. Heels I'd get nowhere fast... or slow! I can jump like a flea and even glide but Heels is the Daley Thompson of the two of us – he's FAST! Together, if we can find each other, we really do make an awesome twosome, and that's the only way we can overcome the emperor Blacktooth. The last time we entered Castle Blacktooth we found the crowns of THREE of the supressed kingdoms but by that time I'd run out of doughnut ammunition and my buddy was lost somewhere in the Safari world – it was the closest we had come to defeating that rapscallion – we were jumping for joy, splitting our sides, dying with laughter... we were Head over Heels!

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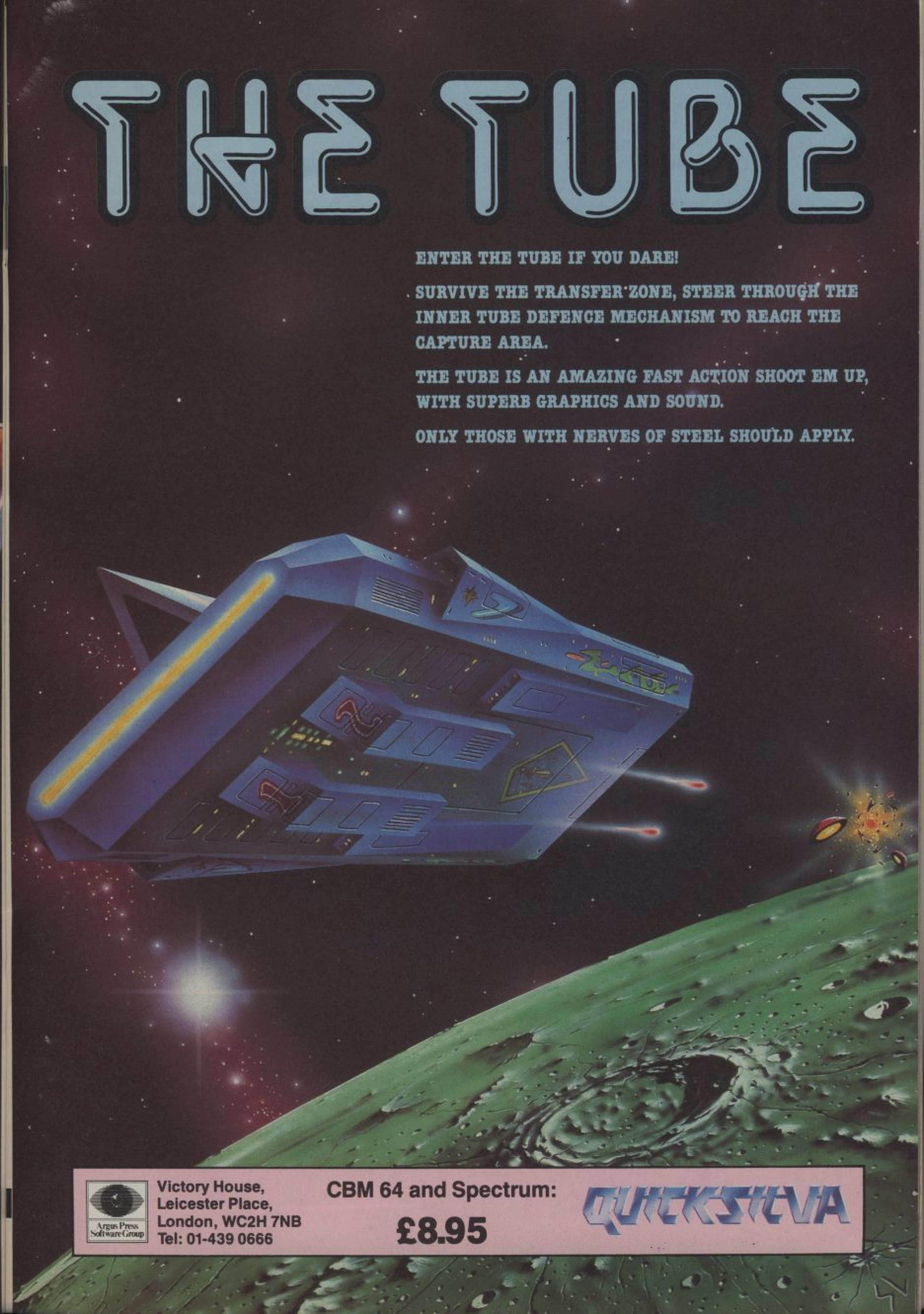
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TRIP'S TOP TIPS

Why has the number one Stateside software house decided to invade this green and pleasant land and set up a proper HQ in the heart of the mighty metropolis? Is it because there's some really ace coders hiding out over here? Or are they trying on the hard sell to convince YOU that bigger and better games come from the US of A? C+VG went to see Trip Hawkins, big boss of Electronic Arts to find out while our American contributing editor, Marshall M. Rosenthal, brings you news of EA's latest games which show just why the company can call itself numero uno!







"If U.S. are Gold then we must be platinum!" says EA boss Trip Hawkins. Big words from the big country — but they sum up the reasons behind Electronic Arts' move to set up a new base in London.

Trip says that over the last few years games made in the USA have been going down well over here — so why not cut out the middle man and bring in the games direct? That way EA can get more feedback on the sort of games YOU want and have more control over the quality of conversions. Simple, huh?

Well, not really. But it's a start. And in a bid to find out precisely what sort of games you want to play EA have been running some "focus groups" — bunches of game fanatics gathered together to talk about what they want to get out of a game. After all US games players are different — they often want things which aren't relevant to people in the rest of the world.

These "focus groups" show just how serious EA are about claiming the number one title over here too.

Meanwhile Trip is looking forward to the development of the personal interactive compact disc scene — the next major revolution!

This should be like an Amiga with a built in CD player.

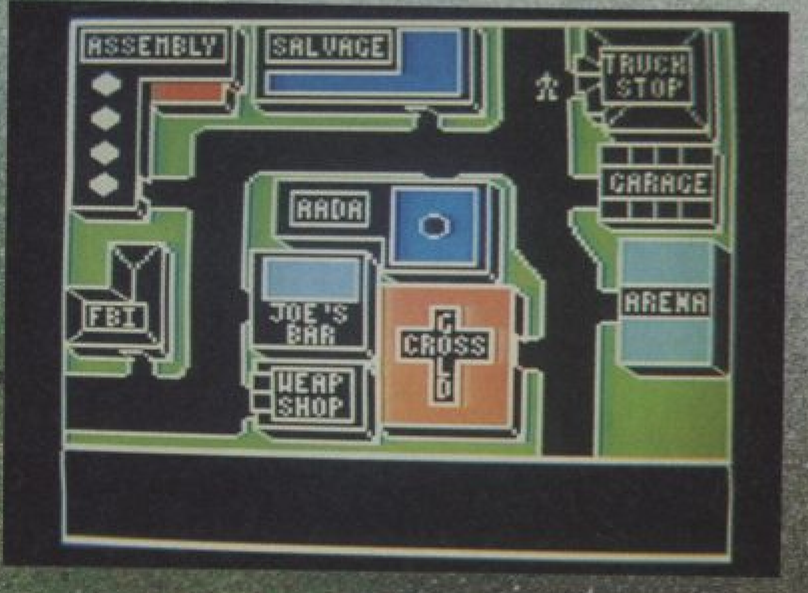
Imagine that! All the power of the Amiga added to the incredible storage capacity of an optical disc. The mind boggles.

Christmas '88 is the time Trip predicts that you'll be seeing this wonder-gizmo. Until then you'll have to make do with your normal run of the mill machines. But rest assured, Electronic Arts aim to make owning them a lot more fun.

How? With games like **Autoduel** and **Starflight**, thats how. Let our US super-spy Marshall M. Rosenthal tell you ALL about them.

Starflight is a comprehensive role-playing game — 270 star systems, 800 planets and seven alien races with their own language and cultures to figure out and explore.

You begin at the Starport. Choose your crew wisely. Humans are good at



learning new skills, but aren't very durable. The insect-like Velox is good at using tools but not too bright.

Androids are tough as nails, but can't learn what hasn't been programmed in them. The last two races, the Thrynn and Elowan are problematic in that the two races hate each other, and will show it at every opportunity.

Crews can be trained to become more effective in their jobs, but it costs of course. The Science Officer can increase his ability to analyze sensor readings, while the Navigator can become more adept at determining the presence of the continuum fluxes in space (which allows near instantaneous inter-dimensional travel).

The Engineer can learn about the latest repair techniques, while the Communications Officer can hone the skills needed to communicate more efficiently. Lastly, the Doctor can bone up (gettit!) on surgery techniques.

The Spaceport is also where you check on messages, make financial arrangements and see how many credits you've acquired.

Perhaps the most important section of the Spaceport is the Ship Outfitting.

This is where you can change your vessel's configuration; adding better equipment and stronger weapons.

Once in space, turn to the Ship's console which consists of four separate screens. The Main View Screen occupies the most space, displaying spatial data and tactical information during Encounters.

The Auxiliary View Screen indicates the ship's status as well as sensor information from the Science Officer and Engineering.

The Control Panel is used to inform/contact the crew about command decisions, while the Text Window contains all incoming/outgoing messages.

During an Encounter (peaceful or otherwise), the Science Officer will use sensors to determine the mass and power status of the opposing vessel.

Communications will allow you to decide on a posture — friendly, hostile or obsequious. The decision here can make all the difference between obtaining useful information, or having to shoot it out.

Starflight is a rich mix of adventure, strategy and action.

You're probably wondering how I got into this mess. So am I. It was supposed to be a simple enough courier job, plenty of empty highway, and speed keeping me ahead of trouble. But here I am. Pinned to the steering wheel, nothing working, and that big sucker bearing down on me for the kill.

As long as I've got this radio channel open, I might as well tell you — unknown listener — just what led up to this whole fiasco.

After the bus dropped me off at the local Truck stop, I rested a few minutes, and listened to some old geezers talking about the local bandit situation two miles out of town.

I bought some body armour, and sauntered out into the City.

Passing the garage, I thought again of how some drivers keep a roster of three, four or more cars, but I never could get into that.

The Automated Assembly Line complex was busy as always. I kept on moving, pinching my nose while going past the Salvage Yard (the old weapons and damaged cars there tend to stink), and went to check out Uncle Albert's Auto and Gunnery Shop.

I know what you're thinking. No car so why look at weapons? Let's just say I like to plan ahead.

That done, I headed over to the Arena.

The schedule indicated that A-night would be tomorrow, so I hoofed it back to the Truck Stop and got a room for the night.

I woke up bright and early and went over to look through the latest maps at the American Autoduel Association.

I ogled the courier missions up for grabs. I had the smarts and skills needed for two of the three offered, and I could feel my blood starting to boil. Now I was in the proper mood for tonight's fun 'n' games.

I stopped off and checked my Clone-insurance. My other body was doing okay, and the brain tape I had stored was close enough to my present status so I didn't have to fork over any more credits to update it.

I had the Assembly Line turn me out a hot little number. Good suspension, strong armour on the back and sides, solid tyres and a punchy power-plant.

I took to the road. Mostly I had an easy time of it. Radar showed any groupings of cars, and since bandits tend to hang together — I just steered clear of them. If there was one thing I didn't want to encounter, it was the mysterious Mr Big and his ratpack.

Everything was going great until this jerk of a professional duelist pulled up alongside and started making obscene gestures.

Next thing I know, there's these two jokers on my tail tossing lead and firing heavy rockets. I managed to sorch one of them, and he spun around and collided with his buddy before exploding. Radar showed another five come up fast, so I abandoned the road, and detoured to a mountain pass.

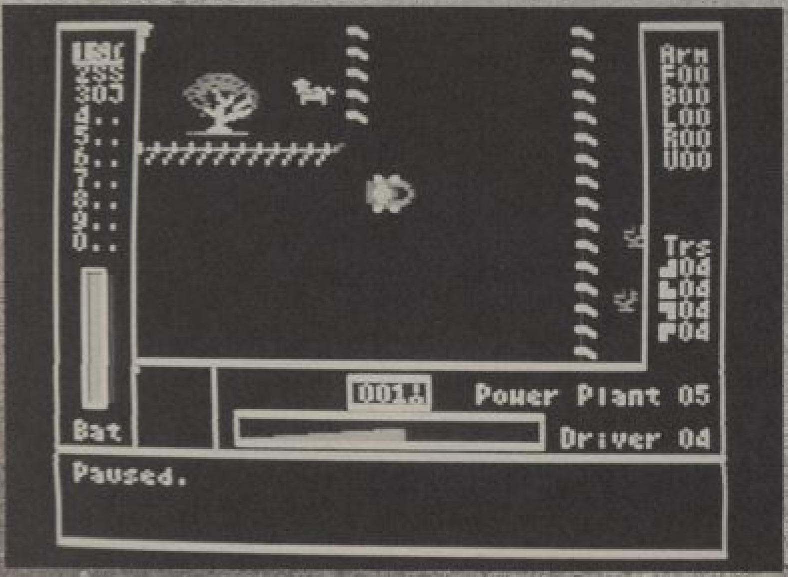
That's where he was waiting for me. As for what happened, try to imagine turning a steep corner at top speed and meeting an immovable object.

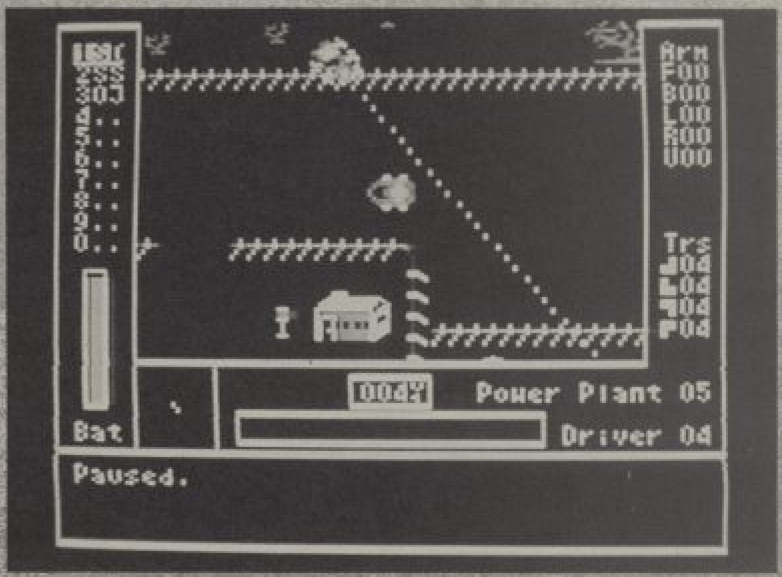
The crash must've knocked me out for a few seconds. I came to, and found myself stuck like a fly on a spider's web with doom about to knock on my door.

The driver's getting out.

He's just standing there, gloating. Too bad he never heard Pete's last and most important lesson; always have an ace up your sleeve. In this case, that's the fake air-scoop aimed right at his belly. With the little machine gun inside that's connected to the foot switch I'm tapping now.

I kind of hope he IS hungry, 'cause he's about to eat 20 rounds of flaming lead!





C+VG COMPETITION MILK RACE

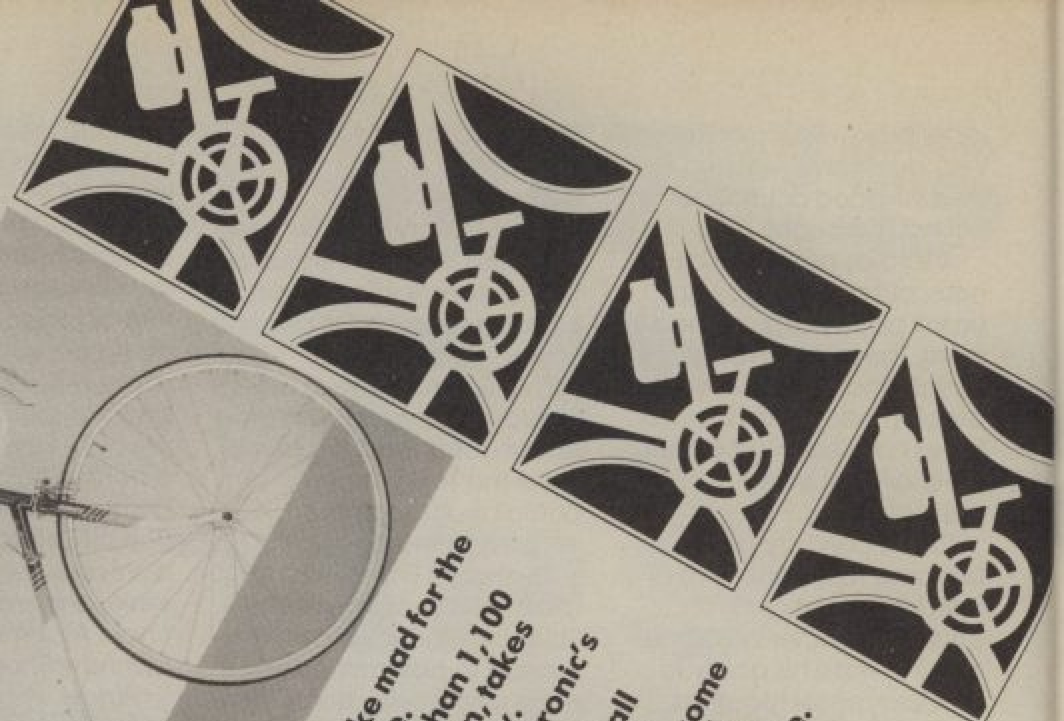
MILK RACE COMPETITION

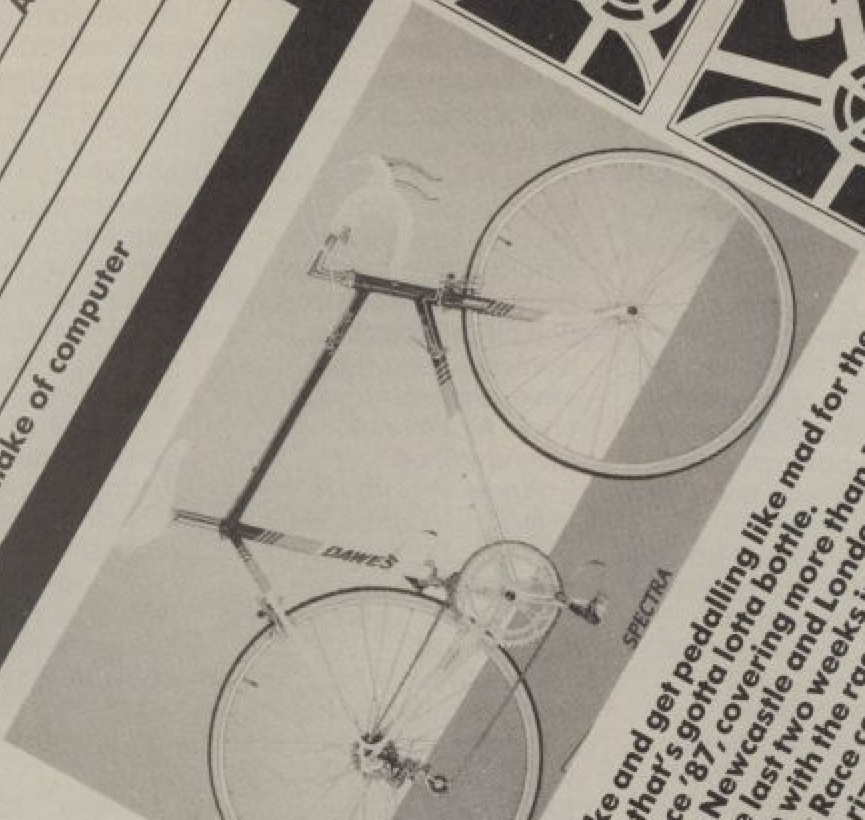
Name ____________________ Age ______

Address ____________________

____

Please state make of computer ____________________





On your bike and get pedalling like mad for the competition that's gotta lotta bottle.

The Milk Race '87, covering more than 1,100 miles between Newcastle and London, takes place during the last two weeks in May.

And to coincide with the race, Mastertronic's releasing the Milk Race computer game.

So what are the prizes? First prize is an all expenses day out at the Milk Race with the organiser who will introduce the winner to some of the world's best cyclists AND be presented with a hand built Spectra 12 speed racing bike PLUS a Milk Race jersey Plus a copy of the game.

The next 50 runners-up will get a copy of the game.

Just answer the following questions and send your ansers to the Milk Race competition, Computer + Video Games, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. The closing date is May 16th.

Questions.

1) The Milk Race leader wears a special coloured jersey. What is the colour?

2) The best known bike race in the world is held in France. What is it called?



RICK HANSON

Sshh! Don't breathe a word to anybody about this competition. It's top secret. Keep it to yourself and improve your chances of winning.

Really it's two competitions in one. So if you are a BBC or Atari XL/XE owner then keep on reading. If not, just go green with envy.

The common link between the two competitions is Robico's super spy hero, Rick Hanson.

For BBC owners we've got 15 copies of The Rick Hanson Trilogy — Saga of a Spy to give away. This consists of the three Hanson games — Rick Hanson, Project Thesius and Myorem.

Prizes for Atari owners are 10 copies of Rick Hanson on disc.

All you have to do is answer our spy questions and send the answers to Rick Hanson Competition, Computer + Video Games, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. The closing date is May 15th and the chief spycatcher's decision is final.

Questions.

1) Which secret agent is known as 007 and has a Licence to Kill?

2) The Fourth Protocol is a new blockbuster spy film. Who wrote the book on which the film is based?

3) Who played the spy-catcher George Smiley in the television series Smileys people?

RICK HANSON COMPETITION

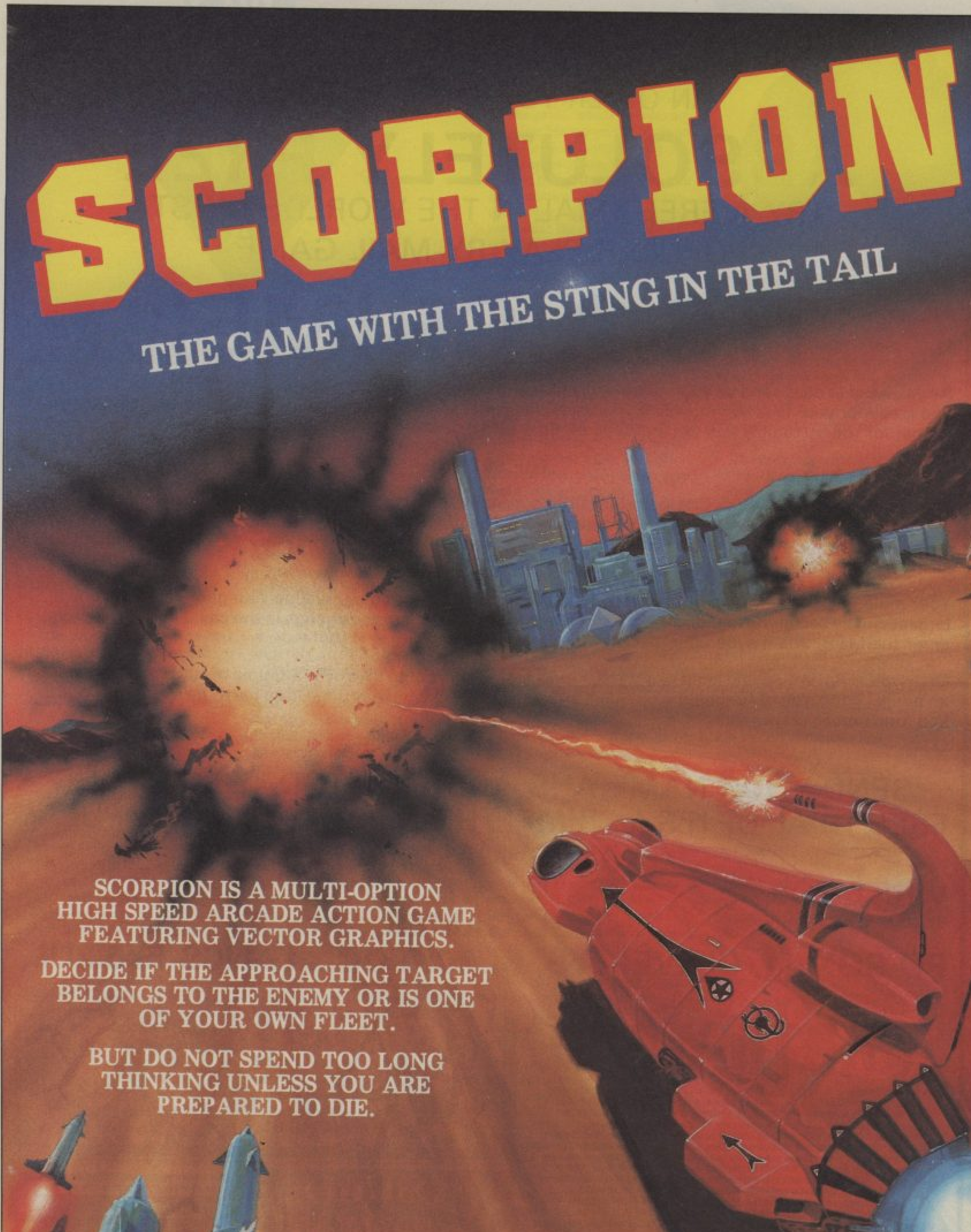
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PLAY BY MAIL



Muskets & Mules

Muskets and Mules is the only Historical Play-By-Mail game currently running in Britain. Steve Badsey, C+VG's History Man, bravely shoulders arms and, equipped with a large supply of stamps, sets out to wage war by mail.

Play-By-Mail — or PBM for short — is a strategy game in which players never meet but send their orders and receive reports through the post from a central controller.

Perhaps it should be called PAY By Mail, since the controller is a business company which charges the players for each move, with them staying in until they've either reached their objectives or had enough.

In return, the players get fast service, a challenging game which they would otherwise never see, and the assurance that someone else is looking after the game mechanics — or rather some*thing* else, since with a few exceptions all PBM games are computer-moderated, and PBM itself is substantially the creation of the computer revolution.

PBM began in the United States, and is still far more important there than in this country, but there are already 24 British PBM firms, and perhaps 30,000 players.

At the moment PBM covers everything from fantasy gaming, including the highly popular *Tribes of Crane* game, to modern politics with games like *Global Supremacy*, or even the futuristic fantasy of C+VGs very own *Domination* (announced last November).

But the only PBM historical wargame running in this country is a four player game of strategy and diplomacy in central Europe



betwen 1805 and 1809, at the height of Napleon's power.

Called *Musket and Mules*, the game has been in existence for less than a year, but already has 10 participating teams. It is run from just outside Cambridge by the PBM firm *Historical Engineering*, whose head, Aiden Powlesland, promises "state of the time travel art".

I met Aiden in the tea room of the Cambridge University Library — well, you don't get disturbed that way. He turned out to be a 26-year-old with a history degree, management and programming training, wild staring eyes and an Apple Macintosh Plus.

He started wargaming the way we all did, by simply never giving up his toy soldiers, and in fact *Muskets and Mules* arose from a ten-year-old dissatisfaction with an old boardgame of the Napoleonic Wars that he used to play. Basic historical research came from a few standard textbooks on the period, which has provided a surprisingly realistic setting for the game.

Muskets and Mules plays on a hex-patterned map representing central Europe from Metz to Brest-Litovsk (look it up!) and from the Baltic to nothern Italy. I was glad to see Italy included, it often gets left out of games, but it had a vital effect on strategy. The four players each take one of the main powers of the period together with all their land forces — France, Prussia, Russia and Austria.

The game starts in 1805 with France at war with Russia and Austria but Prussia neutral. Minor states like Bavaria and the Kingdom of Italy (northern Italy) are either neutral or allied to one of the major powers. The question of how these minor states behave is covered in depth by the attractively packaged rule book for the game, which includes a very fine Hussar on the cover and extracts from contemporary newspapers inside.

If, at times, the rules look like a mathematical problem that you can't solve, this is meant to reproduce the problems of controlling Napoleon's *Grande Armee*. My own reaction was to grumble about "playing the rules, not the game", and about "hex-shaped ruts", but Aiden has found that most players prefer such complex rules, and get a lot of game satisfaction from making them work.

It is a truism that when refighting a historical campaign most wargamers will find out what actually happened, avoid all the mistakes made by the real-life commanders, and in the process find even more spectacular mistakes of their own to make. What really happened in 1805 was that Napoleon countered an Austrian thrust into Bavaria by encircling the Austrians with his own army and forcing them to surrender at Ulm.

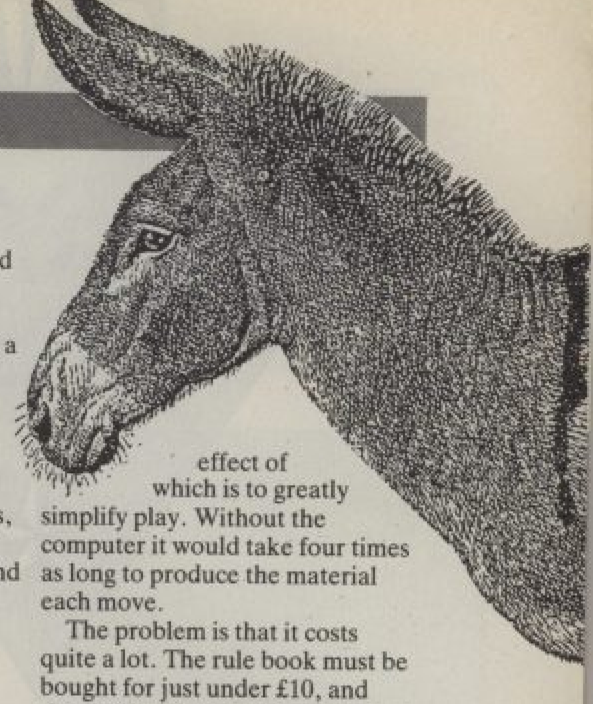
He then pressed on to Vienna and northward to his greatest victory, the destruction of the combined Austrian and Russian armies at Austerlitz. So far in *Muskets and Mules* no French players has managed anything quite so flashy — but then, not every player is Napoleon. Most Austrian players have begun the game by pushing forward into Bavaria, which means they haven't read their history books or they think they can do better.

One enterprising Austrian went instead for Italy, and has just forced the French to conclude peace with a substantial loss of French-held territory. Nor have the Prussians been idle in keeping up diplomatic pressure.

Some of the diplomatic exchanges are important, others are just for fun. "As for your Majesty's supply problems", wrote one harrassed Austrian to his Russian ally, "I would send you some ink but my courier would probably drink it: he drinks everything else".

The players submit their orders each turn (two or three weeks real time, depending on taste) both in writing and in the form of specially marked maps. The computer then generates maps fo the next move showing the players the precise location and condition of their troops, together with anything known about their enemies and allies.

Muskets and Mules is believed to be the only PBM game which provides this map service, the



effect of which is to greatly simplify play. Without the computer it would take four times as long to produce the material each move.

The problem is that it costs quite a lot. The rule book must be bought for just under £10, and thereafter each move is charged at between £11 for the cheapest, Prussia, to £14 for the most expensive, the French.

The high cost is due at least in part to the game being in its early stages — Aiden says that as more players start to play *Muskets and Mules* the price will come down — and it does provide the player with rapid, reliable, moves at regular intervals. I have played postal campaigns run for pleasure in which the only cost was the postage, but I will admit that moves happened at rather irregular intervals of about six months each, and that such campaigns are hard to find.

As the only British historical PBM wargame on the market it has already attracted a few overseas players, and those who play it seem to devote a lot of thought to it. One even phoned in a set of corrections from the bath! If anyone is really rich, Aidan will arrange delivery of game reports by horseback for a mere £2,000 a time.

Meanwhile, an even larger PBM game is being planned, called tentatively *Sabres and Shadows* and covering the entire war theatre in Europe, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic between 1796 and 1810.

My overall impression is that *Musket and Mules* is a good mixture of the standard hex-type game and the postal diplomatic game, combining some of the best elements of both.

The forces on all sides are structured with reasonable historical accuracy, and the player can exercise control down about as far as brigade level, which is as low as any commander should wish to go.

However, the only way to test a game is to play it, and there is a vacancy coming up in one game shortly for Czar of all the Russians. I shall enjoy playing that role in 1805 — it was, after all, only five years from when the Russians invaded Switzerland!

C+VG

PLAY BY MAIL

Hi, this is Wayne again, bringing you the brightest and biggest PBM pages around. This issue there's another of my Wonder Offers, news of the recent PBM convention plus readers comments. All this and the first of our heavy metal music review columns. Enjoy!

The Second British P.B.M. Conference

I've received loads of requests to go into further detail about the conference as some people couldn't make it. Your wish is my command!!

Over 1000 P.B.M'ers from all over Europe gathered together at the Porchester Hall, Queensway, London for the highlight of the P.B.M. calendar.

Inside the hall they had a chance to visit stalls from over 20 companies and examine over 100 P.B.M. games at their leisure.

It was their chance to ask questions directly to the gamesmasters and find out exactly what their games were all about.

Visitors could also take part in a real life roleplaying adventure which was being run by The Labyrinthe organisation — featured in C+VG a couple of issues ago. This involved wandering into smoke filled rooms, with nought but a padded sword and shield, looking for treasure and getting involved in punch-ups with real monsters.

There were roleplaying competitions, run by the more than capable Freedom Warriors with many trophies up for grabs.

One award which was very well received by the crowd was "The farthest distance travelled to get to the Conference award". This was won by a gentleman who came from Berne, Switzerland!! Other close contenders came from Holland, Belgium and the very north of Scotland.

You could even enter the C+VG *Ikari Warriors* competition to try and win the many prizes on offer from the highest score every hour!

There were live combat sessions in the form of tavern room brawls, with authentic costumes and weapons, from various re-enactment societies.

Many free turns, start up packages and t-shirts were given away, most of them by me, to the people answering silly questions I was asking from the stage.

At the end of the day, over 300 people were still waiting behind to hear the results of the votes for the various awards that were up for grabs.

It's A Crime

The first point I would like to make about anyone intending to play this game is that it depicts American street "gang" activities and morals. Some of the terms that are used during a gang's actions may be offensive to some people. It is suggested that young children or anyone of an impressionable nature should not play this game.

Have you ever seen the film called '*The Warriors*' in which a American street gang have to fight their way across various gangs' turfs to get home?



Well, this game is very similar to the film.

You become the leader of a street gang who's main aim is to become the meanest, roughest, toughest gang in the area — as well as controlling the biggest area of Turf.

Once you have done this, a selected few of you become noticed by the mob and they promote you to Boss status. Then it is up to you ultimately to become The Godfather by wiping out all the other bosses. People intending to play *It's a Crime* should note that it is a computer moderated, fixed deadline game. This means that a computer processes all your actions and these are limited to the ones that are either printed in the rulebooks or discovered as the game progresses.

Furthermore, your turns have to be in by a certain date or you will be at a severe disadvantage. For example, your turn sheet could be sitting on your mantelpiece when it should have been sent in, and another gang controlled by another player has already ordered an all out attack on your gang!!

Once you have given your gang an original name, no longer than 20 characters, you send them out on the road to fame. Look up in the rulebook what actions you would like them to perform and set them to it. You can do ANY of the following:

Ambush: This is your chance to ambush another gang on their Turf. You send a bunch of your gang to attack and inflict heavy casualties on the victims of your choice.

Buy: With this order you can buy either shotguns or machine-guns to increase your attacking strength. You can also buy small bombs to blow up buildings or streetdope to push and make large financial profits.

Control: Probably the most important order in the game. This allows some of your gang members to enter a block and either terrify the residents or combat the ruling gang for the right to control the block and receive the protection money.

Enlist: This gives you the chance to obtain some new members of your gang.

Fire bomb: To obtain maximum effect you should have already purchased some small bombs (See: *Buy*) when issuing this order. If you are successful you usually receive a payment for your troubles.

Mug: This order sends some of your people out to mug some unfortunate person.

Robbery: You send some of your gang to rob a particular building and you fence the stolen items for cash.

When you start off you only have twelve orders to select from. As you get further into the game the number of orders available increases to about 20.

Once you have played the game for several turns you get into the swing of things. At the bottom of your turn results sheet is a section devoted to special meetings and '*The New York City Post*'.

You get a special meeting about once every five rounds. Usually an ex-leader of your gang turns up and gives you advice or special orders that you can use to increase your gangs' capability.

I have had the chance to buy some walkie talkies, which increase the defence strength of your blocks, recruit a martial arts expert and buy some dodgy development shares in a building from an equally dodgy relative of mine.

The building concerned "mysteriously" burnt down and I received a large insurance payoff for my troubles.

The *New York City Post* is a list of random crimes and

fights that have happened in your game. It lists the places where other gangs have gone something of note.

One pleasing aspect of the game is that your gang name gets mentioned on someone elses turn from time to time if you have taken part in a major crime. This really IS notoriety!

Gangs: You gang consists of three types of members — Pro's, punks and Recruits. Each member of your gang has to be paid and this comes out of the protection money you receive. Obviously if you haven't enough income to pay your gangs wages, then your members are going to leave to joing somebody else's gang.

Pro's are the hardest fighters, recruits are the weakest. You can gain or lose members of your gang depending upon the results of your actions.

You can spy on other gangs and acertain their strengths if you so wish. Conflict between gangs is resolved by comparing the amount of gang members available added to what kinds of weapons they are carrying and using. Later on in the game though this may change due to other factors you discover.

Notoriety: This is the most important part of the game. This judges how well you are doing. All the actions your gang try will not automatically succeed. The police are out there to stop you and stop you they will do so even if it means laying their life down in the line of duty. Another gang may attack you, or the residents of a block may try to run you off. If anytime in the game this happens, you will lose notoriety.

However if you complete a successful robbery or attack another gang and win, you will gain notoriety. The person who has the most notoriety is the number one player and you receive a list of the top 100 players with every turn you receive to see who's who.

Wayne's Verdict

It's A Crime is, in my opinion, the easiest computer moderated P.B.M. to play at the moment. Issuing orders is easy, mapping is simple and there is nothing in the game which is complicated.

It costs 62.5p to issue four orders, £1.25 to issue ten. You do have a choice over the amount of orders you issue, as you get further into the game you will have to issue ten order turns all the time or you will get nowhere fast.

My main gripe about this game is that you can only control forty blocks per gang. However you can "split" your gang, which allows you to effectively have two gangs at half strength and both gangs can each coltrol forty blocks each.

The catch here is that it costs you another 62.5p or £1.25 depending on how many orders you issue. So you could find yourself paying £2.50 per turn for issuing 10 orders each for two gangs.

If you have never played a computer moderated P.B.M. before then give *It's A Crime* a go!

For all you computer buffs out there **K.J.C. Games** run *It's a Crime* on three 20 meg machines namely an Apricot Zen, IBM XT and a Tandon. The latter have boards specially imported from the USA.

Wayne's Wonder Offer

Every C+VG reader who writes into me, enclosing the C+VG P.B.M logo will receive:

- A FREE set Up In '*It's A Crime*'.
- A FREE rule book.
- Two FREE turns.

Furthermore, in conjunction with **K.J.C. Games**, I have arranged for a special game of *It's A Crime* to be set up for C+VG readers! ONLY C+VG readers will be able to play and therefore the first player to obtain Godfather status will become C+VG's official champion and will be able to play FREE in another game of *It's A Crime* as well as receive FREE start ups in many other K.J.C. P.B.M. games. They will also receive the C+VG Official Champion trophy.

The entries for this one off game will be dealt with on a "first come, first served" basis.

Hints

- When you start, buy and sell loads of streetdope as initially you stand a smaller chance of getting caught by the narcotics squad.
- Firebombing churches is a good way to gain rapid notoriety.
- Aim to control at least two blocks per turn minimum.
- When attempting a robbery try retail areas first as they yield better profits.
- Don't attempt a robbery when your walkie talkies are on. The police listen in and intercept you.
- Don't use an ambush order in your first five rounds.



MAIL DOMINATION, C+VG's VERY OWN PLAY-BY-MAIL GAME, CONTINUES TO GROW. GAME MASTER DAVID BOLTON BRINGS YOU AN UPDATE

A big hello to everyone who was at the second PBM Convention, especially the players of game 40 which was started on the day.

Quite uniquely this must be the only game in which all the players have met personally. Thanks to the organisers, especially **Mike McGarry** and to Amstrad who lent me a machine for the exhibition.

We now have nearly 45 **Mail Domination** games on the go and have just acquired a faster printer as the printouts are our biggest bottleneck presently taking 30 minutes per game. This should allow us to increase our throughput without slowing games down.

GAME REPORTS

Game 10 is racing ahead and has now reached turn 13. As it has passed turn 10 no more substitutes can be put in.

Not all games have reached this far, and this month's winners for the highest points on turn five are:

Game 17 — Player 11 — 111 points, + 5 turns. **Adrian Neal**, Boston, Lincs.

Game 15 — Player 7 — 101 points, + 2 turns. **C Murphy**, Birmingham.

Game 4 — Player 9 — 101 points, + 2 turns. **P G Dawe**, Bishops Stortford, Herts.

Thanks to all who sent in their ages and the votes for the referendum on whether player lists should show complete alliances or just who you are allied to. The overall result is a slight margin of Yes to No — not enough though to change it so the system will stand as it presently is.

COMPETITION RESULTS

Quite a few of you wrote either ideas for Domination or my next PBM game.

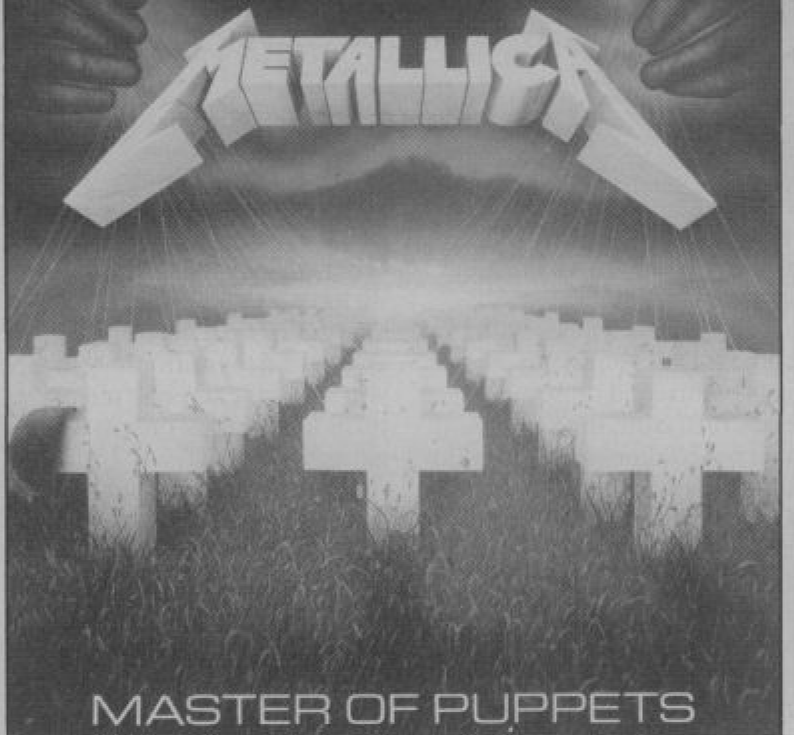
Anyone who wrote should have received a personal letter from me by now and the best idea submissions will have received free turns as prizes.

There are two new options for **Casus** — 12 and 13. 12 allows canals to be dug and 13 is for reinforcing armies. Read your PRINTOUTS.

The winner for the new game ideas competition is: Steven Smith of Royton, Lancs, for his **Tyr-Maya** game.

we will rock you

When the Ed appeared in the office dressed in torn denims, studded leather jacket, dripping chains and a handful of grease in his hair, we knew something was up. "Do ya wanna rock?" he yelled. He then introduced the mysterious Wayne Bootleg, C+VG's new music an, and made a editorial decision: WE WILL ROCK YOU.



For quite a while C+VG has debated whether or not to have a music page. We know you people out there must have other interests apart from computer-linked hobbies.

So as we like to try anything once, here is *Musical Mayhem*. The aim will be to review mainly rock and heavy metal albums, but we are open to suggestion if you want other types of music covered, than just write in and tell us.

Also, continuing in great C+VG tradition of giving lots of things away by running competitions, the first five people to to write into this page and name the current lead singer of Deep Purple will win a copy of any album reviewed on this page.

DARK ANGEL: Darkness Decends. (Under One Flag.)

Since their formation in 1983 and despite various line-up changes, Dark Angel have always been praised in the Metal underground scene as the leaders of *Thrash* Metal.

They have released just one previous L.P. called *We have Arrived* which was hailed as a metallic masterpiece and it left a hard act to follow. However, follow it they have done, with an album that is so heavy it defies belief!!

With an obvious liking for death and the dark (five of the seven tracks have titles that refer to death or darkness), Dark Angel fly through this album leaving a wave of distorted, crippled and twisted musical notes in their wake.

The lyrics are about darkness, despondency and death and lead singer Don Doty shouts them out fast and furiously. The opening track, from which the album gets its name, literally leaps out of your speakers and hit you like a punch.

STRYPER: To Hell With The Devil. (Music For Nations.)

A complete change of tack now. Stryper are a Christian Heavy Metal band and boy do they let you know it.

Every chance they get they ram it down your throat.

I could handle all the songs being about Jesus and God, I could handle all the Bible quotes plastered all over the album, I could even handle the way they give acknowledgement to Jesus Christ in the special thanks column as if he was some kind of roadie or stage manager, but the clincher was the picture of the band on the back cover! Four guys, standing there made up to the nines with loads of make up — so much so if it wasn't for one guy's hairy chest I'd swear he was a woman — all dressed in skin-tight, crotch hugging yellow and black outfits and one of them has got Jesus in studs over his right breast. Not your common or garden Christians by a long chalk.

Leaving the band's religious stance for the moment to concentrate on the album, Stryper with this release have shown what a competent band of musicians they are.



Their music is very much in the early Rainbow style, plus a touch of Boston, which loads of high pitched vocals and lead guitar, supported by an able rhythm section. They contrast heavy raunchy tracks like 'To Hell With The Devil' with quiet ballads like Free and Honestly, but it just doesn't quite come off.

METALLICA: Master of Puppets. (Music For Nations.)

I was really looking forward to this album after hearing their last release *Ride The Lightning*, which was a superb album. However I found this album slightly disappointing as some of their originality seems to have been lost.

One point of interest is that the band seem at a loss how and when to end a song. I lost track of where I was several times as the album stopped and started on various occasions.

JOE SATRIANI: Not Of This Earth.

Question: Do you like technically brilliant guitar playing, drum machines, instrumentals plus a selection of various shades of rock? If your answer to the above is yes, buy this album.

When I received this album I thought "Joe Who? Never heard of him". So I went and checked up on him. I was impressed with what I found to say the least.

Not only in great demand as a studio session player and a teacher (some of his former pupils have included such giants as Steve Vai of David Lee Roth Band, Kirk Hammett of Metallica and Larry Lalonde of Possessed), Joe also writes arranges and co-produces all his own music.

On this album he does all the aforementioned as well as play bass, keyboards and percussion. He does lots of other things too, but to my mind what he does best is PLAY.

This album was a joy to listen to, the absence of vocals bring a refreshing change.

Q5: When the Mirror Cracks. (Music For Nations. MFN 64)

This is another band that seems to be quite a bit mixed up. Listening to the album I jotted down about seven bands that they sounded like, from Genesis to Whitesnake.

The band are based upon the old format of crashing choruses, controlled guitar bursts, and semi-romantic songs. In The Rain is a typical example of this, with lead singer Jonathan K screaming Will You LOVE me" in between flashes of guitar and drums.

Their melodic sound apart, the album is very well produced by Floyd Rose (their lead guitarist) and it is clear that he has all the knowledge and skill to make a potential dull album sound quite exciting.

METAL TOP TEN

1.) Metallica: Master of Puppets (MFN 60).
2.) Metallica: Ride the Lightning (MFN 27).
3.) Metallica: Kill 'em All (MFN 7).
4.) Anthrax: Spreading the Disease (MFN 62).
5.) Manowar: Hail to England (MFN 19).
6.) Stryper: To Hell With the Devil (MFN 70).
7.) Waysted: The good, The Bad, They Waysted (MFN 43).
8.) Wendy O'Williams: W.O.W. (MFN 24).
9.) Tank: This Means War (MFN 3).
10.) Twelfth Night: Art and Illusion (MFN 36).

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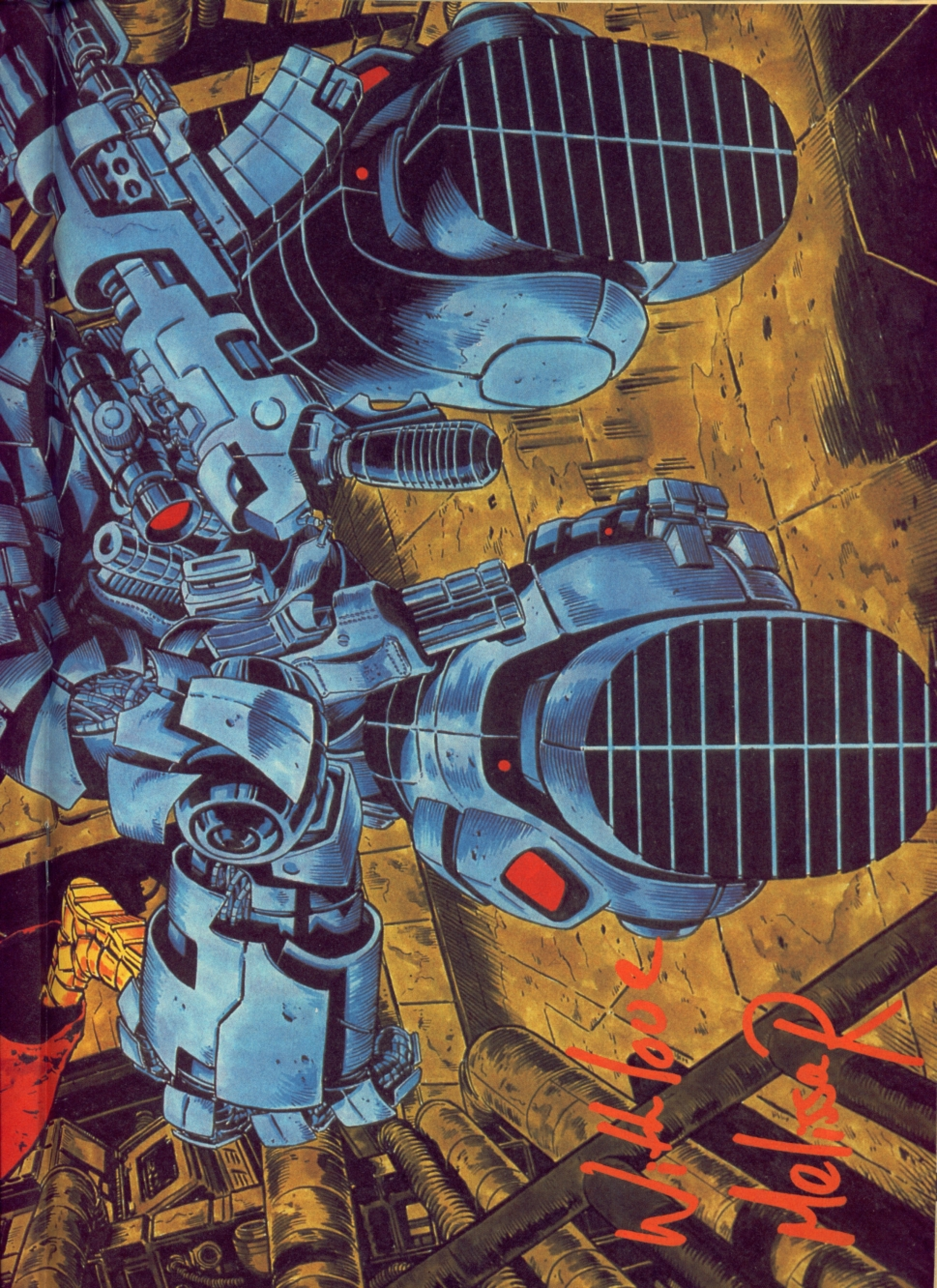
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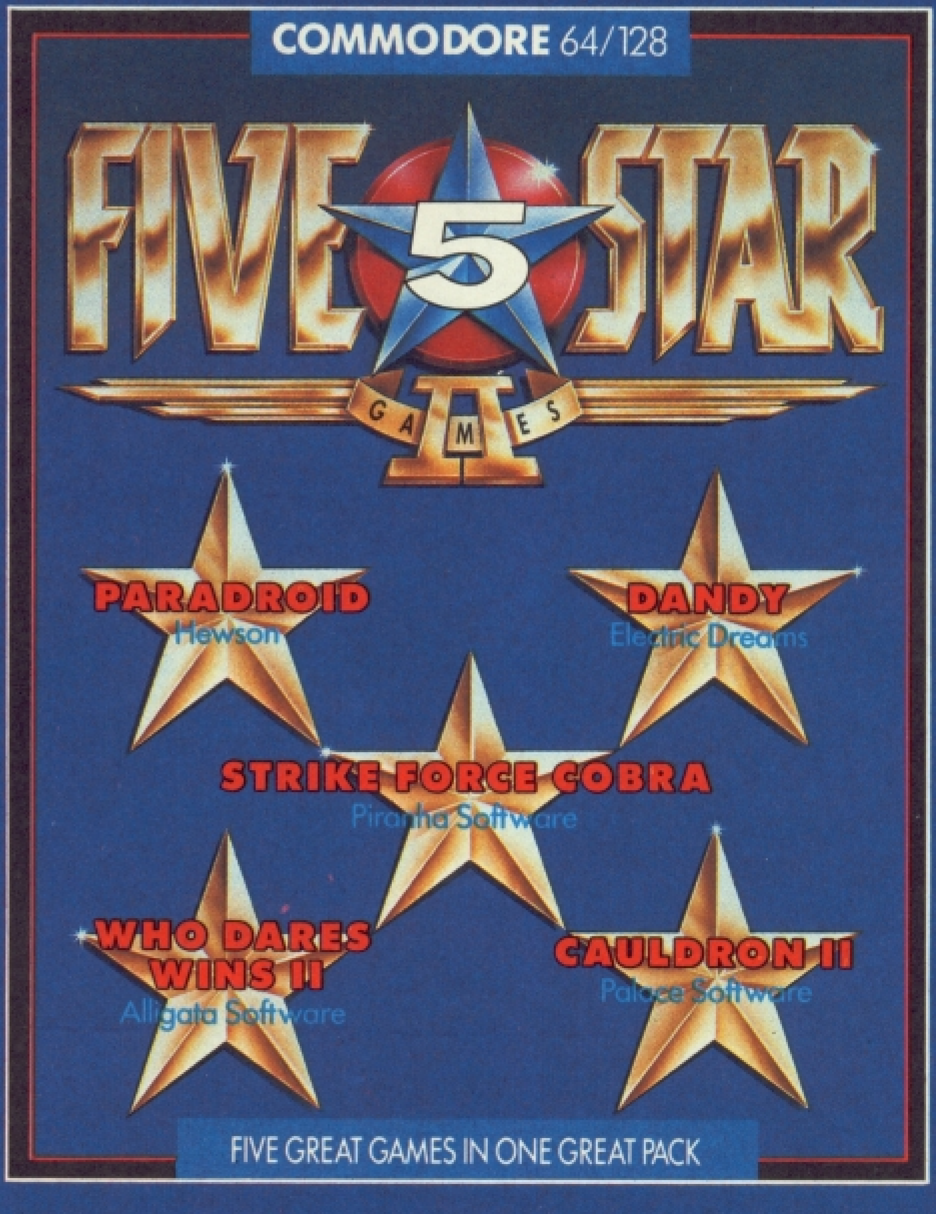
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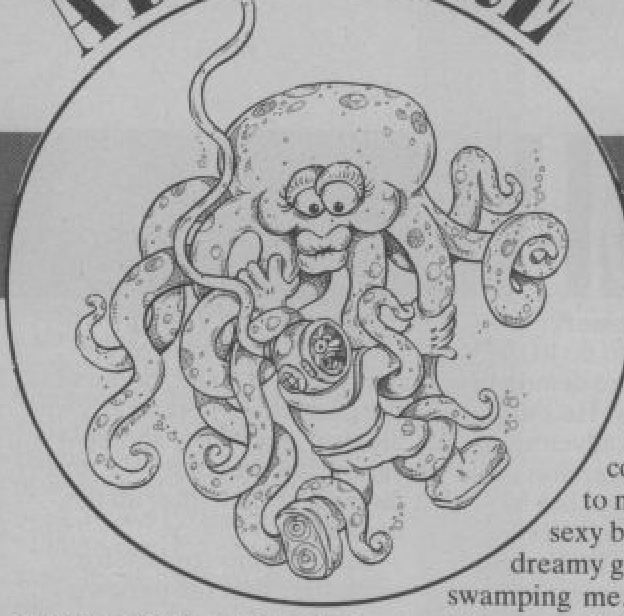
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ADVENTURE MAIL



● The technique of the Red Herring is only effective if the useless object is truly useless, and cannot possibly be used otherwise. I am now stuck at the very end of *Robin of Sherlock*, having released Hurn from the wardrobe. He is described as being tied up, so presumably I am supposed to free him. FREE HURN, no . . . RELEASE HURN . . . UNTIE HURN . . . UNTIE ROPES, BONDS, CORDS . . .! Oops, well and truly stuck. Wait a minute, what about the carving knife I am carrying? CUT/CARVE HURN/ROPE etc . . . NO!

In desperation I consulted my index of clues from magazines, and am told it is a dud. Assuming this is true, then we have here a solution where the knife could be used and I long to know why the bonds cannot be cut with a knife. The trouble is, this is the logical thing to do, and I cannot think on the illogical wavelenght Fergus expects me to. Or is just poor vocabulary I am struggling with — his not mine?

There is nothing wrong with including red-herrings within games, as long as that is what they are. The danger lies when the author does not anticipate possible uses of the object, and fails to allow for them.
Malcolm Harden,
Sheppey.

● Your greatest fan here once again. And I am now completely and utterly famous. I cannot step outside my own front door without hordes of worshippers (mostly female, of course, due to my incredibly sexy body and dreamy good looks) swamping me.

The reason? ANOTHER (swagger) mention in your brilliant pages! The waves of shock and happiness were too much for me, and I have been emotionally drained for nigh on a week now.

Nice one, Keith, for such a great review of *Bard's Tale*. I personally am sick and tired of getting hyper-reviews for bad adventures. I bought it before reading your review, and was extremely disappointed.

By the way, take a look at the *Dr Who* review (January, P23) and you will notice something very strange. The reviewer is "Tim", am I correct? Timothy Churchmouse? Tim the speaking clock? NO! Timothy Metcalfe, the EDITOR! And what do we notice in the second column, nine lines down? I quote "(*Don't start that again! Ed.*)" Hee hee, I thought, another jovial insert from Mr Big! But wait! He is also doing the review! No wonder your adventure column hasn't taken over the entire mag (which it should) — the Ed is obviously utterly deranged and completey off his rocker — he talks to himself during his OWN REVIEWS!
Mike Thomas,
Caerphily.
P.S. I am in love with Clare Edgeley. Can you please print a piccy of her, and give here a kiss from me? I love her, I love her, I love her . . .
Keith's reply: Printing the piccy is a matter for he who talks to himself, Mike. But consider the other matter accomplished. We at C+VG will do anything in the interests of reader service . . .

● You may be interested to hear that Melbourne House, in whom I have great faith, refused to exchange my tape copy of Lord Of The Rings for a disk, even on payment of the difference! I hardly think that type of customer service is good for their reputation. In fact, I was told by a rather impatient sounding lady on the phone, that if I wanted a disk version I should go out and buy one! Not that that helped, because I couldn't find an outlet that sold them!
Richard Dowson,
Newcastle
Keith's reply: In my old TRS-80 days, I dealt frequently with a specialist software firm called Molimerx. It was their standard practice to offer a disk upgrade for a cover charge, on return of an original tape. Ahh — times change. You'd have thought that with the profits flying around these days, firms would be happy to oblige!

● I lie in a darkened room suffering from possibly terminal shock, my new copy of C+VG lying on the floor. Is the price increase of 2p responsible for this state, or Tony Takoushi's rambling? No, it is because I see in the 'Next Month' column that as from the March issue, you will be printing COMPLETE solutions to certain adventures. To say I am stunned is an understatement!

Only last June, in your July issue, you criticised the Danish magazine COMputer for the printing of the solution to Hulk (the same game as you plan to start your series, coincidence?) Many is the time you have answered those that want such a feature, by saying that it spoils all the enjoyment of the game, clues are a much better help source, etc.

Why this sudden (and unexpected) change of policy? I have been a loyal reader since issue 8, and never before have you suggested this, so why now? I would be most interested to hear your reasons, but in the meantime, call for the series of solutions to be stopped.

The adventure column in C+VG is the best on in Europe to my knowledge, don't spoil it now . . .
William Hern,
Inverurie,
Abderdeen
Keith's reply. Thanks for the compliments, William. What I said about COMputer was tongue-in-cheek, a bit of general banter between Christian Martensen and myself! Hulk was chosen to start with, due to the very large number of letters received requesting help for that game. But read on . . .

● I read in this month's C+VG with horror. What's this? As of next issue you'll be printing complete solutions to adventures? Oh come on!

I've been reading C+VG ever since that first October issue years ago, and most of your changes have been for the best. It was C+VG that first caught my interest in computers, and C+VG more specifically your articles, that got me into adventures.

However, I must say that this new idea is probably the worst you've come up with so far. Please tell me it WASN'T your idea?
Andrew Bethell
Walsall.
Keith's reply. There are people who want solution, and those that don't. I have very mixed feelings about it, but decided to give the idea a try for a few months.

ADVENTURE HELPLINE



From one month to the next, it's strange how the spread of games mentioned in the *Helpline* mailbag changes. Of course, there're always the old favourites, like the Mysterious Adventures, Infocom, and Scott Adams classics, guaranteed to bring a sprinkling of problems every month. And then there's the somewhat expected 'new entries'. This month has seen a noticeable increase in *Pawn* problems — only to be expected as new machine versions have started to appear at an increasing rate.

But an unexpected phenomenon has been an upsurge of questions on *Sinbad and the Golden Ship*. This is a Mastertronic adventure, going back to 1985 — the clues in my file, are dated January 1986! Perhaps something is going on that no one has told me about!

And all at once, inroads are being made on *Trinity*, but not at home! **Rainer Fuchs** and **Stephen Englhout** are the first two readers who have written to say they have completed this Infocom epic — and both are from West Germany.

"I desperately need some help with this completely mad, but brilliant adventure," writes **Simon Percival** of Colchester. A troll is blocking Simon's path in *Colour Of Magic*, and every time he tries to do something, he gets knocked off his horse. "Can you also tell me what I am supposed to do when the gods are playing a board game?" he adds.

The only funhouse I have ever heard of, is Scott Adams' *Mystery Funhouse*. But **A. Cooke** of Cardiff has managed to get himself stuck in another funhouse. This one is from Pacific Software, and dated 1984. Is there anyone else out there who has played it and can help?

What Mr Cooke is looking for is the second part of the Golden Mask — he found the first part in a tank of water. In his search, he has killed two of the Gromuts, but is unable to pass the one at the south of the gate near the big dipper.

Mike Thomas (oh no, not him AGAIN?) has moved his wardrobe, and discovered a flight of stone steps leading downwards. But he can't get much further without getting killed by three of *Dracula's* female vampires. Now there's a problem to get your teeth into!

A couple of BBC golden oldies are plaguing **Martin Dennett** of Sutton Coldfield. He can't answer the riddle at the end of *Kingdom of Hamil*, nor can he understand the banking system in *Quondam*.

Another oldie is causing **Adrian Smith** of Cambridge some distress. Not quite so old or so golden as those BBC games is *Inferno*, where Martin has reached inner hell, but Titan blocks his escape. Typing HELP reveals he needs Virgil's help — but is there a special command required to get it?

Aage Christoffersen of Gentofte in Denmark, does not know what to do to the hot furnace or the fire demon in *Causes of Chaos*. He's also playing another adventure. "OK, so *Time Search* is a bad game," says Aage, but by giving it a chance, he found he almost liked this Duckworth adventure. However, he now needs to pass a guard, and knows he must bribe him. Seems the guard won't co-operate, for he won't accept the gold coin Aage keeps offering him. What is really worrying, though, is a hamburger that is listed as an object. Neither 'burger' not 'hamburger' are understood by the program. Is this a bug that is preventing Aage from completing the game?

And finally, there's **Stuart Walker**, of Widnes, trying to kill the Roc, in *Sinbad and the Golden Ship*.

If you are suffering from an Adventure, then don't forget to drop us a line. We will get back to you with a good tip if possible, but come what may, we WILL get back to you! and of course, we'll be delighted if you can help us to help other desperate adventurers!

There's **Paul Coppins**, professional adventure-tester and inveterate bacon sandwich eater; **Steve Donoghue**, horse problems a speciality; **Matthew Woodley**, a highly successful adventure player with cash to prove it, plus **Daniel Gilbert** and **Adrian Bott**, who only play to win.

Here's an unsolicited testimonial from **Joanne Tucker** of Croydon. "Thanks! You're the best. I buy both Zzap and C+VG, but you're slightly better, since you care, and answer your adventurers." Only SLIGHTLY better? Shame on you, Joanne!! Service to our readers is the most important part of our job!

Guy Thomas of Whitstable is not so sure that *The Pawn* is the best adventure ever, as many people claim. Some of the puzzles are very nearly illogical, says Guy, and the ending is a dreadful disappointment after all the hard work.

Guy takes me to task for suggesting that the parser is better than that of Infocom. Whilst the vocabulary may be larger, he says, the friendliness and complexity of the parser understanding definitely isn't.

The two parsers are definitely different, and each tends to be a bit specialist at its own thing. But overall, I find that the Scrolls parser does more for me. Infocom adventures often come up with some very dense answers to relatively simple commands after an agonising pause.

Of course, this varies depending upon which machine you are playing on, and I am referring to the Commodore 64 versions, bearing in mind that Infocom games do not have graphics to fetch and display. Sometimes, too, the stringing together of commands results in not even the first of the string being recognised, even though perfectly acceptable on its own.

Guy's well-reasoned criticisms of my views on these parsers, and his distress over my *Bards's Tale* review, earn him a coveted C+VG T-shirt. Which just goes to show — we don't only reward 'yes' men in this magazine! We like to be kept on our toes!

Not everyone, of course has access to a disk drive, and those of us that do tend automatically to rate disk adventures more highly than almost any tape-only adventure. Not so with **Gregory Quinn**, himself an avid Infocom player. *Dracula*,

PROBLEMS? THEN WRITE TO KEITH CAMPBELL, COMPUTER & VIDEO GAMES, ADVENTURE HELPLINE,

ADVENTURE CLUES

IMAGINATION:
Heat to hasten melting, will fuel a cold treat, to gain a toy.

FANTASTIC FOUR:
For a soft landing, nova near the bottom!

THE HELM:
Many hands make light work. Eight, in fact.

DRACULA
There're blankets under the seat in the coach.

SEABASE DELTA:
To get on the see-saw, walk the plank!

COLOUR OF MAGIC:
Say the magic number at the altar, and throw the crystal at Bel Shamaroth.

VALKYRIE 17:
A good shake will bring a treasure topping!

TRINITY:
A spade is needed to open the crypt. Drop the icicle to get the lump. Squeeze the skink to death!

WOODBURY END:
The beast can be found east of the grille.

WITCH'S CAULDRON:
Wear the witch's hat before going into the room with the dead man, to get the spoon.

a humble Quilled three-parter on tape, is the best adventure Gregory has played in ages.

"I just love the long atmospheric descriptions, they're just like reading a book," says Gregory, adding: "I hope Rod Pike produces some more brilliant games like this."

I'm sure he will, Gregory, and I look forward to them too. But it just goes to show that quality is in the plot and implementation, whatever the medium used. Disk will only make possble what can't be done on tape — it isn't a magic formula for success.

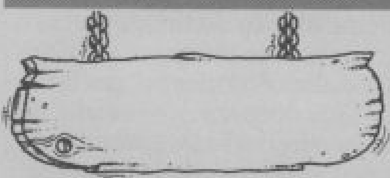


The Pawn was responsible for what **Carl Young** of Nottingham described as a 'rather annoying incident' recently. The game asked him to type in a word from the book (part of the game's security system) and requested page 17, line six, word eight.

Carl looked up the word, entered it — and it didn't work. "I found the answer after much arsing about, and completely by luck," says Carl. If you get stuck, then try page 17, line eight, word nine, suggests Carl!! A T-shirt flies in his general direction for this tip.

Meanwhile, the game-play problems are gathering momentum in the *Helpline* mail. Two recent letters from West Germany, showed **Reiner Wald** of Bonn trying hard to rescue the princess, and to get her safely down the stairs, but to no avail. Why do people always want to rescue princesses, I wonder?

Tim Sattelkau of Luedenscheid, on the other hand, is bemoaning the fact that he can either vote and gain 40 points with no other apparent advantage in the game. Or he can rescue the princess instead, but for no points. Oh ho! "And what is the prism for?" he asks.



William Hern of Aberdeen, has discovered some bugs in the Atari ST version of some Infocom games. Are they present in all versions, he wonders?

In *Wishbringer*, after buying the ticket from Miss Voss, you can pick up the gold coin. Thus you can keep buying tickets, and increase your score continually!

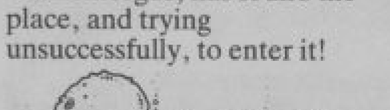
In *Zork 2*, William discovered that if you die after having killed the dragon, both yourself and the dragon are reincarnated. Although transparent, the dragon will follow you around, and will melt the ice again, which it thinks is still there too!!



Richard Brock of Hemel Hempstead has really been feeling the cold this winter. It's when he gets out of *Dracula's* coach that it hits him. Who can help warm him up?

Paul Stapley, meanwhile, has been both playing the game and not playing the game. Sounds like something out of *Hitch Hiker??*! It's true! Despite having discovered a most complex method of cheating Quilled games in such a way that he can get to any location, he cannot get into the mansion in *Dracula Part Three*.

Lost in the forest, and in search of the *Carfax Estate*, is **Paul Wilkins** of Leytonstone, whilst **Lewis McNiece** of Carrickfergus, has found the place, and trying unsuccessfully, to enter it!



No you can't, says **Gareth Williams** of Swansea. The crack in *Twin Kingdom Valley* is a red herring! and it only appears in the C64 version of the game.

Gareth has also cracked how to get the strange Ship of Doom messages mentioned by **Malcolm Harden** some time back. It appears as a message when you do something naughty to the female android, suggests Gareth. "After that, try paying her!" adds Gareth.



Here's an offer Zorkers can't refuse! Anyone wanting a complete map of *Zork 1* or *Zork 2*, can take advantage of a kind offer by **Dave Owens**. Enclose a large stamped addressed envelope, and write to Dave at: 83 College Road, Trowbridge, Wilts BA14 8N2.

And some adventure support for TI owners, and **B. Anderson** of High Wycombe in particular, comes from **Kirsty Clift**. Kirsty suggests contacting the 'International TI User Group' run by **Peter Brooks**, 96 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 6JT (tel: Oxford 510822). The group's magazine has an adventure helpline, and will give advice on softwre availability.

When Keith Campbell **first set eyes on *The Pawn* it was enough to make him go out and buy an Atari ST just to be able to play it! That was one year ago, and it's seemed like an age waiting for the second offering from** Magnetic Scrolls' **Why has it taken so long, and what have they been up to since last April? KC went along to find out.**

Guild

It's the text part of an adventure that matters at Magnetic Scrolls. Ironic when you think it was the stunning graphics of *The Pawn* which first caught people's imagination before they were hooked on the subtleties of the parser.

Scrolls were so confident about the quality of their system that they were busy working on the follow up to Pawn even BEFORE the original QL version was released! That follow up was **Guild of Thieves.**

But the success of *Pawn* meant that every computer owner under the sun wanted a copy. And that meant working on conversions rather than bringing out new adventures.

Pawn was never planned to go out in so many versions as now exist. But when you are on to a good thing it would be foolish indeed not to make the most of it.

During the past year, *Scrolls* have managed what they had originally thought impossible. Their biggest triumph was the full graphic version of the Commodore 64.

"We didn't really think we could do that on the 64," Anita Sinclair, boss of *Magnetic Scrolls*, confessed.

All this took time, for the system had to be re-written. Roddy Pratt was engaged primarily with this task in mind, and is mainly responsible for the 'miracle' on the 64.

During this period, *Guild* was already taking shape. Artist Geoff Quilley had already been hard at work producing the illustrations to go with the scenario. With all the versions of *Pawn* nearly behind them, *Guild* was ready to be implemented in earnest.

Guild, like its predecessor, has about 30 graphics locations, and these are produced in two separate versions — one for 16-bit computers, the other for 8-bit computers. Geoff Quilley uses the Neochrome utility on the Atari ST to produce the originals, which are later transferred to the Amiga and other 16-bit micros.

"The graphics capability of the ST is not so advanced as that of the Amiga, but the results are so good that there seems little point in working to the Amiga standard," claimed Anita Sinclair.

All except that "special" title screen, of course, which is geared up to the full power of each machine.

The 8-bit pictures are manually copied from the originals, on the Commodore 64, by artist Tristram Humphries, who also uses a graphics utility. These form the basis of all other 8-bit graphics.

Tristram had called in with his first batch of screens when I arrived at Scrolls' office, and I was able to enjoy the unveiling of the C64 pics.

Tristram has used different colours in each tiny pixel to give the illusion of more colour than is actually there, and to add a degree of detail that is missing in the *Pawn* pictures. Each picture took him about 30 hours of work to produce.

The 30 or so pictures in the game, are nowhere near enough for one per location, for despite heavy compression of the graphics code (down to about 22%) there simply isn't enough room on one disk.

When the space limit is hit, what takes priority if there is a nice little puzzle still not implemented in the game?

"We go for better complexity in the game itself, rather than for the extra picture." Anita was quite definite, confirming that, indeed, it is the adventure itself that comes first.

In fact, quality is the prime aim at MS. I quoted the view of a Spectrum-owning C+VG reader, who dearly wanted to be able to play *The Pawn*, and who wasn't worried about being able to do things that are irrelevant to the game just for the sake of a "clever" parser.

"We once sat down and considered what we would need to do, to achieve just that," she explained. "We would lose Eliza (the parser), half the vocabulary, and have to slim the game down drastically, for there is 80k that is unique to the game itself. We would have a game, just, but *The Pawn* — or *Guild* — would be totally destroyed. It's not what we set out to do."

When *Guild* comes out, it will do so for all machines in quick succession, since the donkey work of writing the systems has been completed. And then Anita and her crew will be able to concentrate on the next title.

It could be *Upon Westminster Bridge*, which will be a completely different type of adventure.

Or it might even be one presently code-named *GM*, another saga of Kerovnia. But *Rainbird Software*, the publishers, will not let me reveal the proper title.

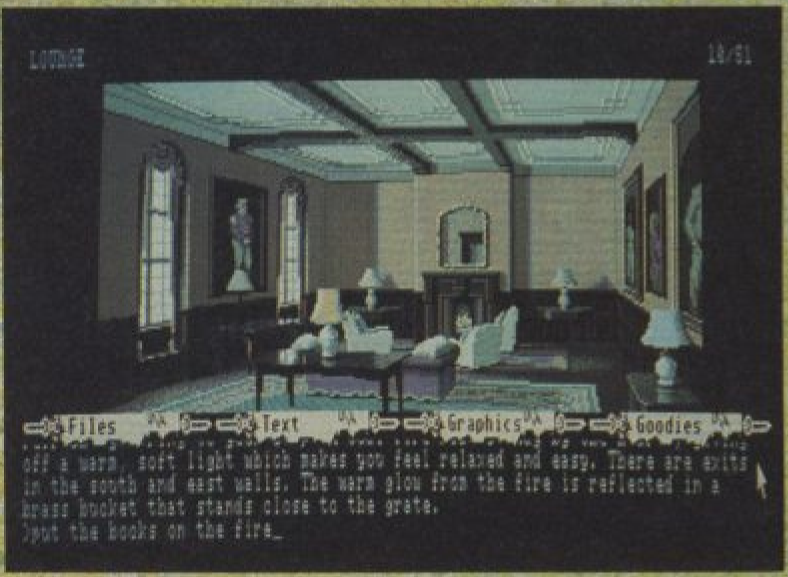
Which it is, you won't have so long to wait this time. It's due to hit the streets within the next two or three months.

THE REVIEW

There comes a time when an editor looks suspiciously at a reviewer who has been playing a game for a long time. Could he actually be enjoying it, rather than playing it because it is his job too?

One minute the poor fellow is working hard, and the next, even though doing the same thing, he is malingering!

Well, I have to admit to a good deal of malingering with *Guild of Thieves*. Set in the legendary Kerovnia, you are





of Thieves

taken by boat to a jetty, and dropped off, being told to ransack the local castle, by way of a test assignment.

You must return with all the booty! Fully kitted out for the task, you find yourself dropped by boat at the jetty, wearing jeans, striped sweatshirt, and carrying a swag bag.

The master of the castle is hiding a dark secret, whilst his gatekeeper is running a little betting business on the side.

If he likes the look of your face, he may even invite you to have a flutter, so it will pay not to be penniless when the time comes!

But not all the action takes place in the castle. The surrounding countryside makes for a pleasant stroll, through the golden fields of wheat, and perhaps a leisurely chat with the friendly miller. Ooops! Watch that step on the way out!

Scrub, copses, and a river give way to a hill, itself the entrance to (the inevitable) complex of caves. Here you may visit the zoological gardens (if you have the cash), and try talking to a mynah bird, or perhaps get wrapped up in an encounter with a boa-constrictor.

Not far away is the local cemetery, with a somewhat cereal grave. This is where you will come across what I reckon to be the finest picture in the whole game.

Working by night, a lamp on the ground nearby, is a gravedigger intent on his task, seen through the half-open iron gates of the cemetery. The lighting and colour gradation of this picture are nothing short of amazing.

Further south is a mysterious temple. If you are into frescos, you will no doubt recognise some famous ones decorating its walls.

On the other hand, if you are into coloured squares, you might eventually discover some satanic secrets in the temple's deeper recesses.

The puzzles themselves are not quite so sequential, and are less devious than those in *Pawn*, so that, to a greater extent, it is possible to concentrate on one at a time, and then come back in a replay to follow up another one.

There is quite a range of difficulty, but even the ones that seem impossible at the start don't come too hard once you've got the feel of the game.

If you can't make all the connections, don't worry — there's a wealth of clues scattered around the game, so make sure you read all the magazines, books, and pamphlets that you come across!

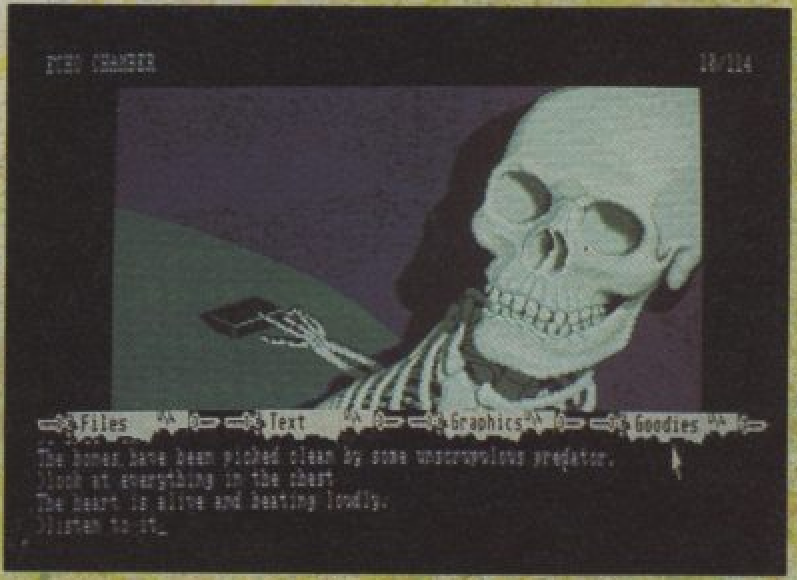
Here is a huge adventure, with seemingly endless variety. There's plenty of scope for sport including fishing, ski-ing, billiards, boating, or just plain gambling, if you are among the less active.

For the more daring, there's plenty of danger, too! How'd you fancy a walk across red-hot coals? A tussle with a grizzly bear? Or a trip through a rat-infested room?

Naturally, I've got hooked, and can't wait until my very pre-production copy has been exchanged for a final version, in which the endgame will be fully implemented. THEN perhaps I'll discover what that prehistoric bird is doing flying overhead halfway through the game?!

Guild of Thieves will be available very soon after you read this. Don't hesitate to go out and buy a copy as soon as it's around!

Guild holds such a wealth of puzzles and surprises, it will make even the best budget adventures look expensive in terms of what you get for your money!









STATUS SOFTWARE

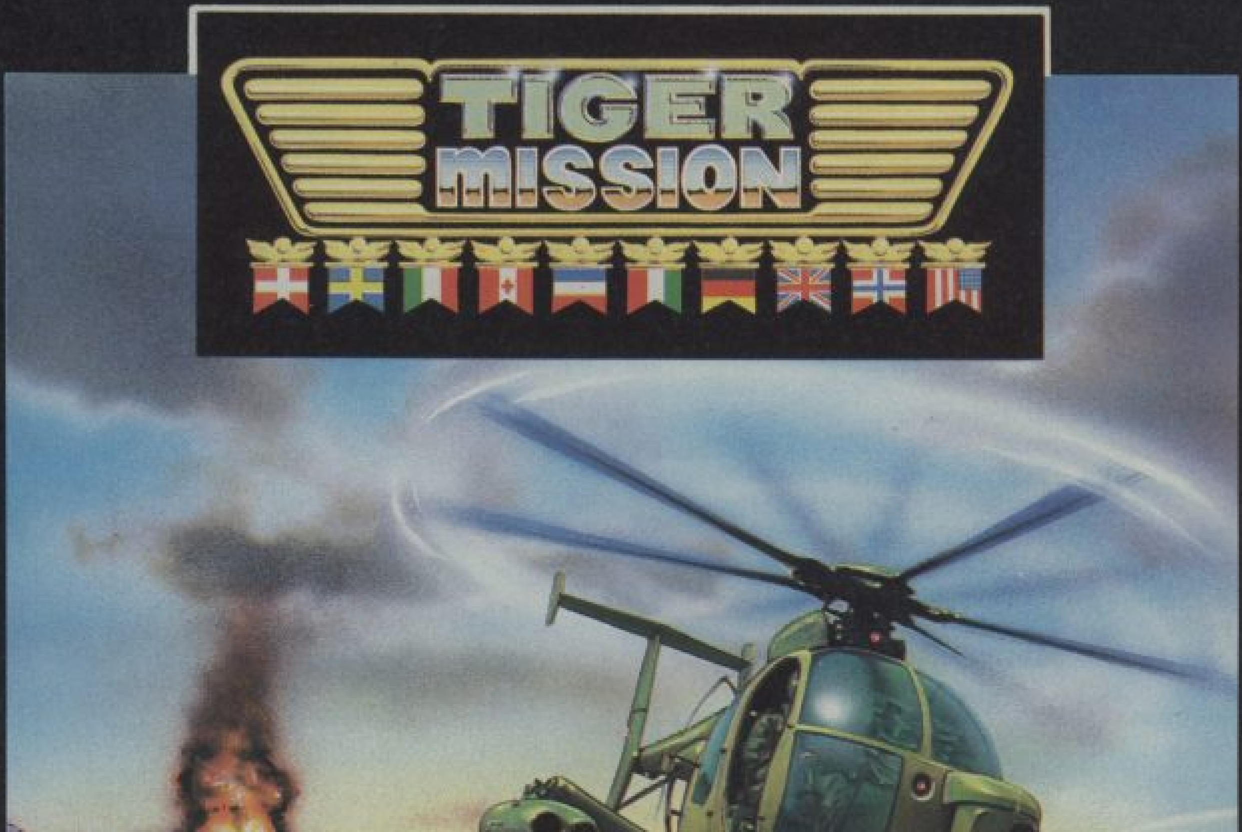
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1 HELPLINE

SCOTT ADAMS SCOOPS

Running a Spectrum side by side with the original TRS-80 versions, I could not find any noticeable difference in the text, or the responses, at all, even down to the opening dedications. I did feel that the Spectrum character set used gave a much less tidy appearance to the screen, and took away some of the original 'feel'.

► **SUPPLIER: US GOLD**
► **MACHINE: SPECTRUM; AMSTRAD; C-64; C-16; BBC/ ELECTRON; ATARI (8-bit)**
► **PRICE: £9.99**

PIRATE ADVENTURE

Written jointly by Scott and his wife Alexis, this game starts off in your London flat, from where you have to travel to Pirate's Island. Here you have build a boat, but in order to sail to the nearby Treasure Island to collect your treasures, you first have to find and win over the Pirate!

One of the easier of Scott's adventures.

VOODOO CASTLE

This game was written solely by Alexis. Count Cristo is lying dead in his coffin, and only by performing a strange ritual around it can you restore him to life. First you must discover the ritual and then find the ingredients necessary, before the final climax around the coffin.

STRANGE ODYSSEY

This is a science fiction adventure. Your space craft is crippled, and investigation of its surroundings leads you to the discovery of a strange alien teleport device. Discovering how it works is part of the fun — you never quite know at what strange place you might be deposited next, from an alien zoo to a methane snowstorm.

Collecting alien treasures, and repairing your ship are the main aims of this game. Oh, by the way — beware the Rigellian Dia-ice hound!

BUCKAROO BANZAI

This was not one of the original 14 adventures; it was a one-off, co-written with Phillip Case, and was based on the film of the same name, which was shown in the USA in 1984, but never saw the screen in the UK. This is the first UK release of the game on any format.

Buckaroo Banzai has a vehicle which will travel through solid matter — just as well for it will sure come in useful in finding the nuclear device invading aliens planted.

My least favourite of all Scott's games.

	PA	VC	SO	BB
► VOCAB	6	6	7	6
► ATMOS	8	6	7	4
► PERSONAL	8	4	6	3
► VALUE	10	10	10	10

CASTLE EERIE/SHIPWRECK

► SUPPLIER:TARTAN SOFTWARE
► PRICE:£2.95
► MACHINE:SPECTRUM 48k
► REVIEWER:STEVE DONOGHUE

As the title implies, with this cassette for the Spectrum, you receive two adventures instead of one. Both games have graphics for the majority of locations along with the usual game save and restore features.

As the name suggests, *Castle Eerie* is set inside a seemingly deserted run down castle, which is apparently haunted and creating quite a scare among the local inhabitants. As special agent Charlie Jones, (from the loading instructions you appear to be a right charlie as well!) you are assigned to find out what is happening inside the castle.

Being a right charlie means you turn up in the castle grounds with a gun containing only one bullet. One bullet means only one chance, so you must make the most of your single opportunity.

After figuring out a way into the castle, the fun really begins. It doesn't take long to realize that a gang of criminals are using the castle for their purposes, but exactly what for is not yet apparent. Between dodging the forever present guards, you must get around the castle, making use of some of the objects to help you cross between rooms which are inaccessible due to decay after years of neglect.

Every nook and cranny must be explored and searched and because the castle is so large that's an awful lot of places. A well contructed map will help a lot at this stage. Not only that, but as you move towards the centre of the criminal operations, you must contend with electronic surveillance devices designed to trap intruders like yourself.

Once you have figured out what is going on in this very unusual castle, it's time to make your findings known and contact the outside world. From now on, it's a race against time as the villains try to dispose of you at the final hurdle.

Shipwreck follows a nautical theme in which you must first plan your own survival by making it safely from a passenger cruiser which is about to sink, to a desert island. Once there (providing you make it that far) you must find the items necessary to bring about your rescue.

The story unfolds on board ship where an announcement is made that there is a small fire in the engine room, although at this stage there is no cause for concern. Being a rather shrewd person, you realize that all may not be well, so you plan your safe escape from the liner.

I soon found that once more it pays to be friendly, and tipping a bartender pays its own rewards. The purchase of a map of the surrounding ocean helps a lot, so does finding the ship's current position at sea.

Once free of the ship, and with the aid of a little navigation, you find yourself washed up on the sandy beach of a nearby island. That's where the fun really begins. Finding your way around the ship was bad enough, but on the island . . . well there's lots of places where trouble abounds for the novice castaway.

	Castle Eerie	Shipwreck
► VOCABULARY	7	8
► ATMOSPHERE	9	10
► PERSONAL	8	10
► VALUE	10	10

C+VG HIT!

ADVENTURE



2 REVIEWS

SAVAGE ISLAND PART 1

► SUPPLIER: TYNESOFT/ ADVENTURE SOFT
► MACHINE: SPECTRUM, COMMODORE+4, C-64, C-16, BBC/ELECTRON, ATARI
► PRICE: £7.95
► REVIEWER: MATTHEW WOODLEY

The first in the *Savage Island* duo is, aptly enough, called *Savage Island Part One*. The game starts off with you on the beach of the island, standing next to a large stone head rather like those found at Easter Island.

From this starting positon you can wander along three other beaches, and if you really want to, you can take a swim in the shark infested waters. But this doesn't get you very far, so you have to start making decisions about what to do.

First thing on your agenda should be to take some coconuts from the conveniently positioned tree on one of the beaches. But if you hang around too long before finding shelter, a nasty hurricane called Alexis comes and rips you apart in a very unfriendly manner.

But this ill wind there indeed does blow some good, as the hurricane knocks down some trees which you can somehow pick up and carry for use later.

The island's dormant volcano has a crater which has been filled in with rain water to form a lake. One use of the log is as a means for floating any heavy objects across that you think will be useful.

Also to be found in the volcano is a rather gruesome grizzly bear. But the bear is the least of your problems as the random hurricane tears around the island. I call it random because it is. As far as I know whether you survive the hurricane or not is a purely random affair. During the days I spent playing it, the hurricane never left without killing me.

Savage Island is too outdated now to be a decent game. It was first released on the TRS-80 back in 1982, and although it now has some nice quickly drawn graphics (the screen is split into two, with graphics in the top part and scrolling text below it) it is nothing to write home about.

► VOCABULARY	5
► ATMOSPHERE	6
► PERSONAL	5
► VALUE	5

SAVAGE ISLAND PART 2

► SUPPLIER: TYNESOFT/ ADVENTURE SOFT
► MACHINE: SPECTRUM; COMMODORE+4, C-64, C-16, BBC/ELECTRON, ATARI
► PRICE: £7.95
► REVIEWER: KEITH CAMPBELL

To get into Part Two, you need the password that ends Part One. But there is the snag — Scott has provided two different passwords, one of which allows you carry through a specific object with you — if you are carrying it with you when you complete Part One.

You enter the game completely naked, facing a force field. One short step through it, and you meet a gory end in a vacuum. But before long, you'll have solved that little problem, to find yourself inside an alien space ship, where you soon meet up with a Neaderthal man.

You must experiment with the object you brought with you in a rather unobvious way, and learn how to psycho-transfigure, to eventually solve the mystery of the stone head on the beach, and the reason for the disappearance of dinosaurs from the face of the earth. Be warned — it is very difficult!

And overpriced, too. I would have thought these games would have been better bundled together, and sold at about £6.50 for the text version, and £9.95 for the graphics versions, to make them comparable value to the Scott Adams Scoops tape from US Gold.

► VOCABULARY	6
► ATMOSPHERE	8
► PERSONAL	6
► VALUE	5

IMAGINATION

► SUPPLIER: FIREBIRD
► MACHINE: COMMODORE 64, AMSTRAD, SPECTRUM
► PRICE: £1.99
► REVIEWER: KEITH CAMPBELL

He's at it again! Peter Torrence, that prolific purveyor of adventures, is back already after *Apache Gold* with yet another offering — this time on the Firebird label once more.

Imagination has you sitting in front of your computer with a disk of unknown contents, which you picked up in a dusty condition from under a pile of old games in the corner of a computer store. Despite the fact that the slightest bit of dust on a disk will render it, and probably your drive, unusuable, you insert it, and find a menu offering four games.

Select any one of the titles, and you are into the game of your choice, taking part adventure-style. "Raid Over Margate" puts you in the turret of a tank on an old airfield at Margate. If you choose '2002' you are transported to the inside of a time machine disguised as an AA box. (It is much smaller inside than it is out, and comes complete with a timelord.) "The Lords of Half Past Nine" has a scenario very similar to a well-known epic, whilst "Panic Miner" consists of a series of platforms in the form of a maze, where memory guzzling sprites form a constant danger.

Within all of this, your objective, as determined by the timelord, is to find the number of stars in the universe. Not an impossible task, you might think, but the problem with Peter Torrence's games is the problems. They defy all logic, and yet seem logical enough afterwards.

Imagination has graphics at most locations, and was using *GAC* in Peter's inimitable tongue-in-cheek text. Nothing world-shattering, but you can't help liking it!

► VOCABULARY	6
► ATMOSPHERE	5
► PERSONAL	5
► VALUE	8



ADVENTURE 3 REVIEWS

► SUPPLIER: INFOCOM/ ACTIVISION
► MACHINE: C64; SPECTRUM
► PRICE: VARIES
► REVIEWER: KEITH CAMPBELL

HOLLYWOOD HI-JINX

This is one of Infocom's best, written by new author 'Hollywood' Dave Anderson, who in 1983 joined Infocom as a tester, and after progressing to manager of testing, became a game writer in 1985.

Your Uncle Buddy Burbank was a Hollywood big-shot in his time. He and his wife Hildegarde were not blessed with children, but and as kids, spent you and your cousins many happy holidays at their superb seaside mansion. Buddy died some years ago, and now, following the recent death of Hildegarde, you are attending the reading of her will.



Imagine your amazement when you hear they are leaving their entire estate to you, their favourite nephew! But there is one snag — you must spend a night in the mansion and its grounds and find ten treasures hidden on the premises by morning.

On your arrival, you head to the porch, full of anticipation — and find the door is locked.

But wait, there's a back door, just by the patio. It just couldn't be that easy though, could it? Of course, that door too, is locked. There's not an awful lot more you can do, unless you fancy chancing your arm in the hedge maze — and how well you remember the days when Aunt Hildegarde warned you about going in there without a map!

At this point the game becomes infuriating, but what are adventures about if not the satisfaction gained from finding you are clever enough to solve logical problems? So there must be a way in, and the means is staring you in the face right from the start. When there's nothing left to do, you will turn to it, and, perhaps, it will turn to you! As a puzzle — sheer poetry!

This is a house full of traps and surprises, and just to make you feel uneasy, the sound of nearby footsteps is sometimes heard . . . Something heavy falls to the floor upstairs . . . Are you being manipulated? Or is one of your other cousins prowling, trying to prevent you from getting the treasures? There is plenty of food for thought in many of the puzzles in HHJ, meaning that they are the sort you can chew over, and come up with a number of angles of attack.

There is also food for thought in the parser and vocabulary, for Infocom's is now beginning to look a little old in the tooth, when compared with that of Magnetic Scrolls.

A visit to the bedroom you used to sleep in on your hols, reminds you of the time when you slept in the bottom bunk, and cousin Herman got sick in the top bunk . . . You got your own back later by sticking honey up his nose, and was soon in trouble for being out of bed with a cold. That is just one small example of the depth of the background theme that runs throughout the game.

An excellent adventure with some difficult but very rewarding puzzles.

► VOCABULARY	8
► ATMOSPHERE	10
► PERSONAL	10
► VALUE	9

C+VG HIT!



► SUPPLIER: PLAYERS/ SMART SOFTWARE
► MACHINE: SPECTRUM 48K
► PRICE: £1.99
► REVIEWER: KEITH CAMPBELL

THE SERF'S TALE

It was the review copy of yet another version of *Colossal Cave* landing on my desk, that prompted me to investigate what Nigel Brooks and Said Hassan, who are Smart Egg Software, were up to. Of particular interest is the fact that a new source of adventure games is not using a commercially available utility like the *Quill*, as is so often the case, but their own, effective and superior system.

I loaded *Serf's Tale* into the Spectrum, and found an almost completely different game from the 'standard' Colossal. The text is enhanced and completely rewritten.

In fact this is *Colossal Cave* in a very different guise, and it stands playing even if you have played the original, since many of the problems have been reworked.

The text system achieves better than 50% compression, and as extras there are GET ALL, and DROP ALL commands, plus FULL and BRIEF to control the amount of location text displayed. However, you will not find a multi-word parser. Nigel Brooks and Said Hassan believe the problems in the original adventure were constructed with two work input in mind, and have stuck to the same format.

A new concept in marking progress in the game is the STATUS command, which tells you have many locations you have visited, as well as number of treasures stored. And as it does so, the existing screen is cleared with a rather neat dissolving routine.

Just one black mark to Interceptor, for naming this game *Serf's Tale* on their Players label. There is no indication for unsuspecting customers, that this is really *Colossal*. But for such a smart program, £1.99 must be the best value *Colossal* ever!

► VOCABULARY	8
► ATMOSPHERE	10
► PERSONAL	8
► VALUE	10

C+VG HIT!



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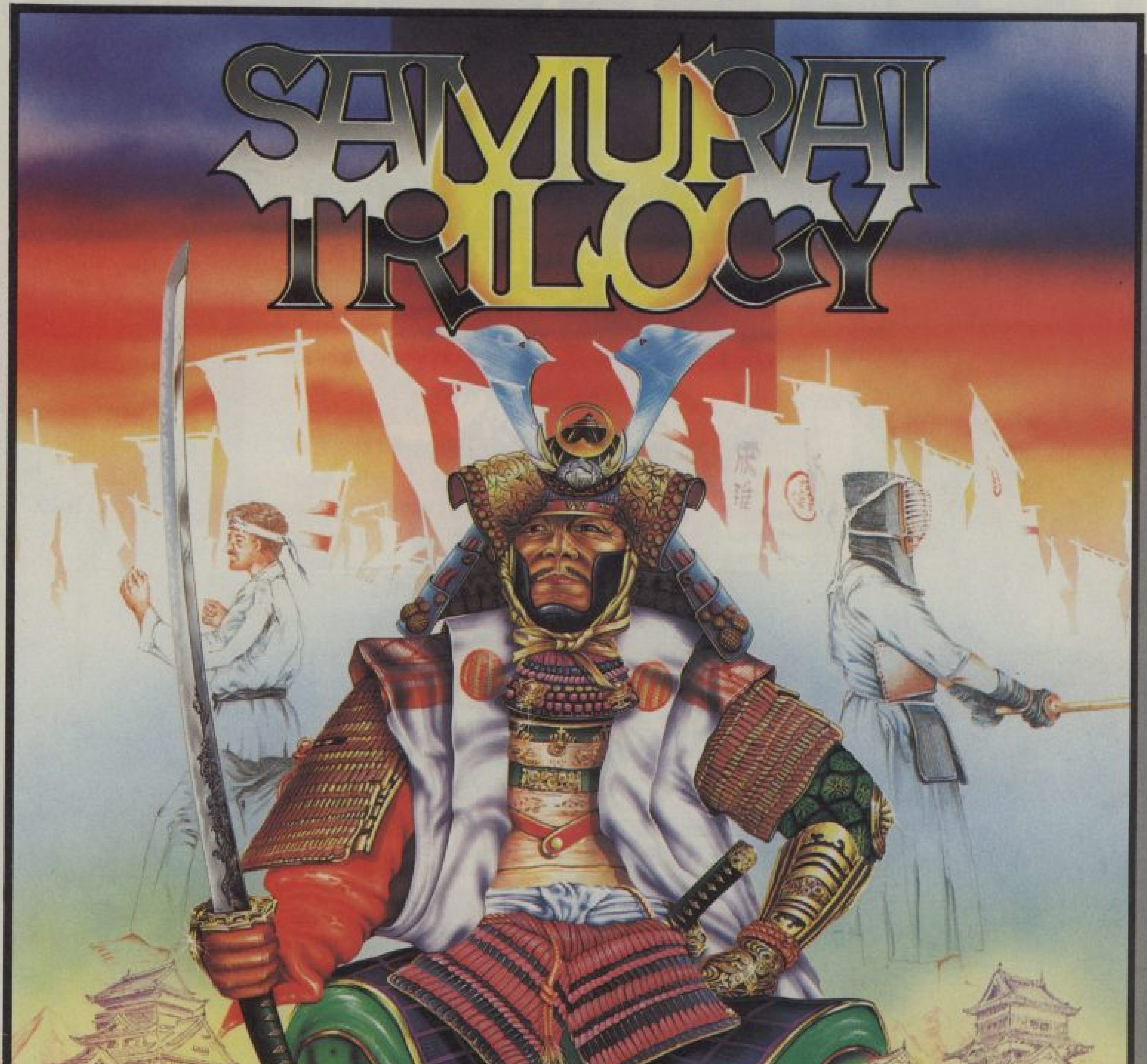


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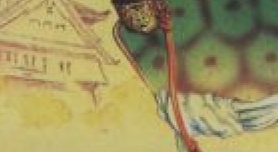
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HABITAT

No, no! We're not talking about the trendy furniture store! This *Habitat* is the latest and possibly greatest online interactive adventure in the world. It harnesses the power of the C64 to put YOU in the centre of the action. Our Stateside newshound Marshal M. Rosenthal tells you all about the adventure and the Quantumlink system which enables you to access the wonderful world of *Habitat!*

Who designed and created Habitat? Responsible for developing this world-in-the-electronic-dimension is Chip Morningstar. We can never know what preparations God might have made, but Morningstar's three years at Lucasfilm's Game Division were preceded by image processing research, and software/language design for instruments to be placed on orbital satellites.

Morningstar was working feverishly one rainy evening trying to complete a bit of code before calling it a night.

A lightning bolt struck the building and shorted out every printed circuit, including his terminal, just as he was in the midst of compiling a program for customizing Avatars.

The ensuing electrical maelstrom disintegrated his physical body, and left him trapped within the code.

Lucasfilm personnel discovered this the next morning when they booted the work disk to find a familiar-looking figure lolling around with his feet on the furniture. Morningstar was subsequently moved into Habitat, where he now resides.

C+VG's American contributing editor, Marshal M. Rosenthal, is no stranger to the unexpected. But even he found it a bit unusual to receive a game designer IN a package marked URGENT/DO NOT X-RAY! Rosenthal booted Morningstar up in a Commodore 64 for the following exclusive interview.

C+VG: How does it feel to be a part of *Habitat?*

CM: It's different, but who's complaining? Before this happened, members of the Games Division used to sit around having an ongoing debate on artificial intelligence. We wanted to create an automaton. A thinking, feeling being to appear in software. The Quantumlink network opens up an avenue for our creating a unique world of alter egos that can parallel human experiences. This is really an exciting prospect.

C+VG: What have you discovered about your new home?

CM: Quite a lot. But first off it's called a Turf. I discovered that no one here eats or drinks, although you can still go to bars and hang out. Artifacts are strewn throughout, and you can purchased unusual devices and search for strange and mystical things. But nobody's running around in ski-masks pulling *Friday the 13th* stuff. That doesn't mean that everybody is nice, but the general attitude is for fun and adventure rather than mayhem. Besides, the Oracle provides everyone with a fat bank account and it's real easy to live off the interest. Just go to a dispenser and get some tokens.

C+VG: Can't such a life get boring?

CM: No way! Remember, this is interactive. Everything is constantly in motion whether you're a part of it or not. You may return to Habitat after a few days to find all sorts of changes. And of course there are the other Avatars popping in and out of your electronic life. There's unknown territory to discover, adventures to participate in, even social interactions like games and politics if you want. Puzzles are everywhere, and you have to learn the different rules and regulations of this world the hard way — by experience.

C+VG: How do you do things as an Avatar?

CM: Simple. A joystick moves you around, and there are a selection menus that appear onscreen when you want to go somewhere or do something. The keyboard takes care of the rest. Talking in word balloons does take a bit of getting used to though. Still, if it's good enough for Popeye. . .

C+VG: Did you have to create everything from scratch?

CM: Fortunately, no. We could build on some existing software tools, and adapt them to work in whole new ways. Take the shape of the Avatars for example. They may seem to be of the same stuff as the characters used in our Labyrinth game, but there are entirely different techniques occurring.

C+VG: So just what is going on?

CM: To start, every single thing that happens is linked through the Host computer, and then into other players from all over. This kind of processing takes a lot of power, and so we're using a STRATUS non-stop super minicomputer. This baby is actually a number of processors hooked together. Eight are online right now, and more can be added as the need arises.

Consider just what is going on; colour graphics, sound, disc input/output, keyboard and joystick commands. ALL operating at the same time. You'd almost expect the disk drive to explode and the C64 to roll over on its back and die!

C+VG: How does the software tie in with the STRATUS?

CM: Well, first the program is loaded after entering the gaming section of *Quantumlink.* Then you put in the disk containing object data. The C64 is then controlled by three things; what your Avatar is doing, what other Avatar's are doing, and what the Master Program thinks about the whole business. Think of the data as building blocks that can be formed into just about anything.

Each location (store, forest, dungeon, etc.) is called a region, and I've been able to count over a thousand of them right now. There's a lot more on the way too. Some really awesome stuff.

C+VG: Any comments on how this is affecting your social life?

CM: I've no complaints. My Turf is swell, and I can change the furniture, colours or patterns in a flash. It's great.

● *Continued on Page 80*

Telecommunication services allow people from all over the world to call in using their computer and a phone modem. Unlike other telecom services, Quantumlink is designed for use only with the Commodore 64/128 computers, and even provides the software free with a purchase of the machine.

Q-link performs a full range of text and information services, but because it is designed for the exclusive use of C64ers it can take advantage of the computer's graphic and sound capabilities. None of that generic stuff, with games represented by numbers and bits of graphics tossed together from letters. Here you'll find the same type of graphics as you can access from a disk.

The software handles everything. Auto-dial modems can be triggered into action and the software will do the rest, even taking care of giving the correct password and name.

Users select topics by pointing to options displayed on the screen. What could be simpler? There's even an online Commodore Information Network, with helpful advisors always available to chat with.

Things to do include the People Connection (where special interest groups can be found), a learning center containing educational materials, and news and weather reports.

Plus lots of games, where you can play against the master computer or another person. You can even sample new software provided by various companies.

Possibly the best news is the price. *Quantumlink* gives unlimited base service for only $9.95 a month, and that's for 24 hours a day on weekends, and 6PM to 7AM weekdays. Premium services, like *Habitat*, cost an additional six cents a minute.

Quantum Computer Services Inc.
8620 Westwood Center Drive,
Vienna, Virginia 22180

Continued from Page 79

being able to swtich heads whenever you want. I've also heard that those who enter *Habitat* the normal way can even choose their gender. Making friends is as easy as going out the door, and you can later contact them directly with ESP. There's even a mail service and regular newspaper. Maybe I should place a classified and see if there are any others who got zapped here like I did.

C+VG: How many Avatars are out there anyway?

CM: Okay. Truth is — who can count that high? I did limit it to six in one region at a time, because more than that makes me claustrophobic. That's all you can fit in a hot tub anyway, and that's one place I wasn't going to leave out. But I did add a ghost feature to let unlimited numbers of Avatars congregate together, although the full-bodied ones are warned by a little icon that someone is watching and listening in. Imagine the fun of performing on stage with hundreds or thousands of invisible spectators. What an ego trip! And no food means no critics pelting you with tomatoes.

C+VG: So you're happy in *Habitat?*

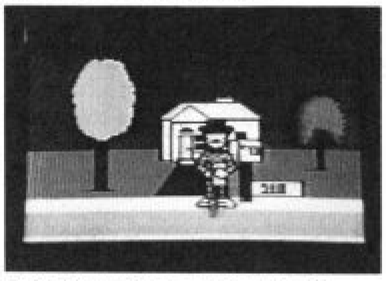
CM: You bet. My friends come online and visit me, and I look forward to seeing the world evolve as Avatars interact with each other. I do miss the northern California weather though, so perhaps I'll add a tanning salon. There's no end to what can happen. It's gonna be fun.



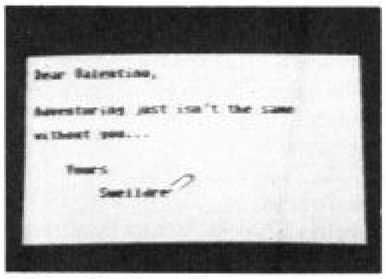


Yes, I am the all-powerful Oracle. I have consented to show you around HABITAT, so pay attention. Usually I do not bother to make myself known directly. Imagine how much time it takes to be answering everyone's questions about every little thing. That's why I usually respond by mail.

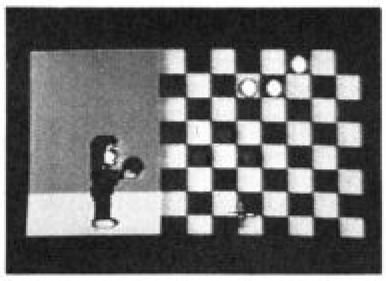
Here we see two Avatars, for such they are called. The fountain of the city of Populopolis is one place where I manifest myself, but I wish she would turn down the music. I also like the shopping on Rodeo Drive, and the Skid Row area, although it tends to get a lot less civilized there.



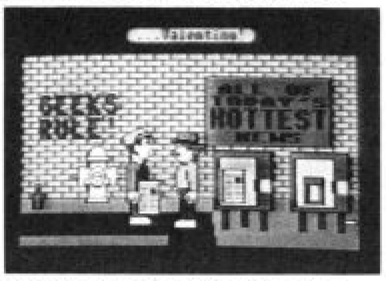
This is Valentino, and there is his home, or Turf as I have decreed it. Looks like he's gotten some mail.



So Swelldre is no longer mad at him, eh?



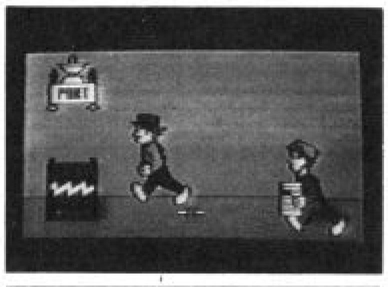
Let's peek in on her. Hmm, guess she's getting tired of playing checkers and wants to use him as a pack mule for another adventure.

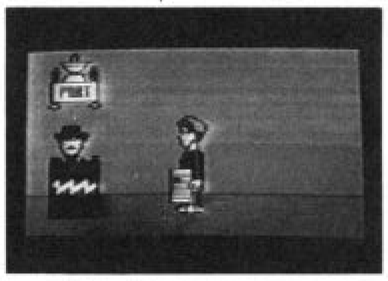


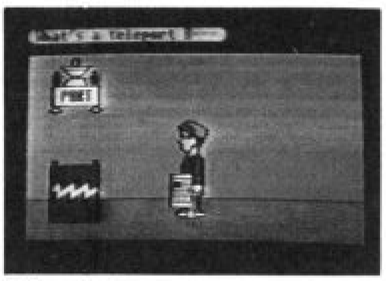
I wouldn't have credited Valentino with so much sense. He's checking the weekly newspaper, the ***RANT***, to see if there's any mention of what Swelldre's been up to.



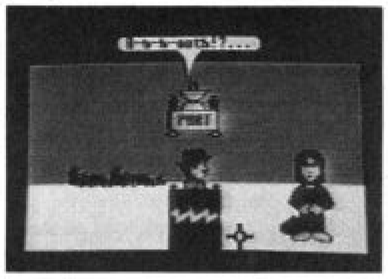
He's still going to meet here though.



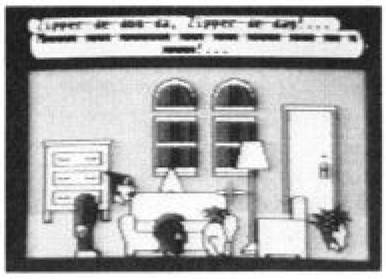




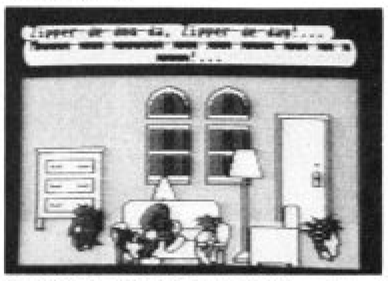
At least he's smart enough to use a Teleport.



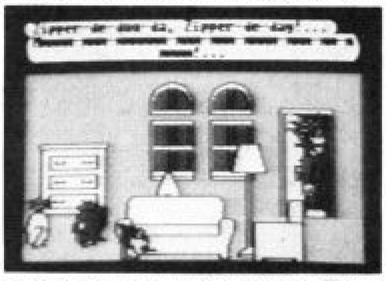
There's Swelldre, and she looks like she's in another one of her ogre-ish moods.



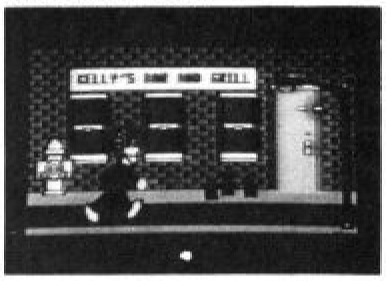
Let's leave Valentino to bear the brunt of her bad humor, and look in on a new arrival to Habitat. His name is Kusama, and he's in the process of choosing a head to reflect his personality.



Sometimes I think I put this in so I could watch Avatars running around like chickens with their heads cut off.



Well, he managed that all right. There he does out the door.





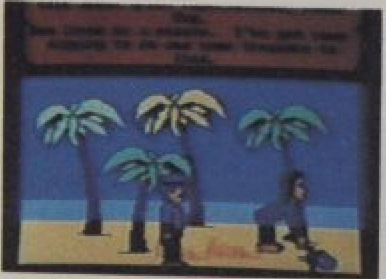
Yeh, I thought he was heading for the bar.



He sure got into networking quick. Probably a solicitor in the other world. He'll be here for a while.

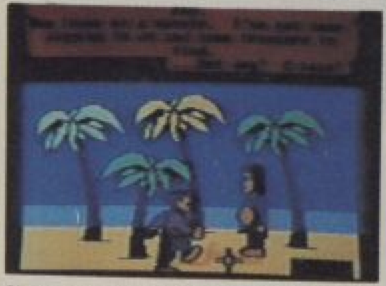


Let's see how Swelldre and Valentino are making out. He's following her lead as always.





Looks like she's found something.



She better be careful with that crystal ball. Oh no! She's telling Valentino to get lost and wishing that she was somewhere else.



Well, she got her wish. I don't think we should watch, it's going to get a bit painful.

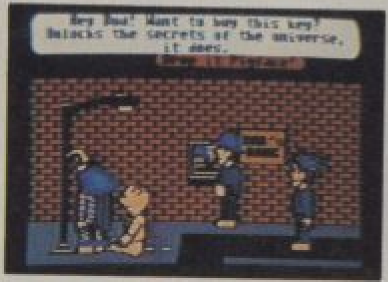


I see a couple of Avatars hanging out around one of the bank token dispensers. Sometimes I wish I hadn't given everyone millionaire status, but at least it keeps them from spending all their time doing boring things like getting jobs and working.



For shame! Who made that rude noise?



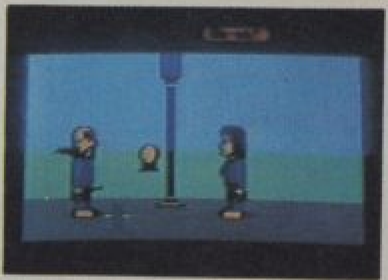


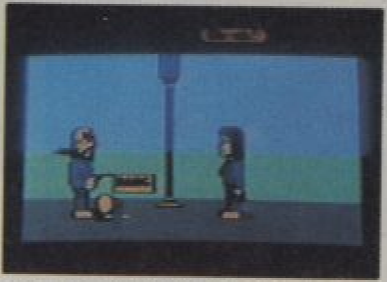
Apparently, Pratt thought Pigface responsible. Interesting that all he did was bounce him a bit.



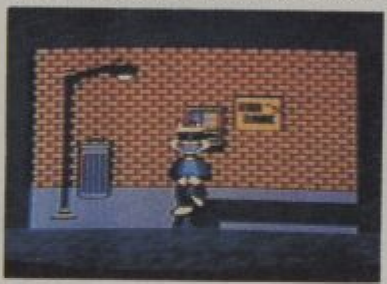
Can't fault Swelldre for trying. She's made it through the forbidden woods and isn't daunted by the mysterious dungeons. That's one tough Avatar!







Well, so much for her good luck. Say goodbye to the crystal ball, Miss S. At least the devil has a sense of humour.



Let's leave them to sort things out.



There he goes again, frittering away tokens on vending machine stuff.

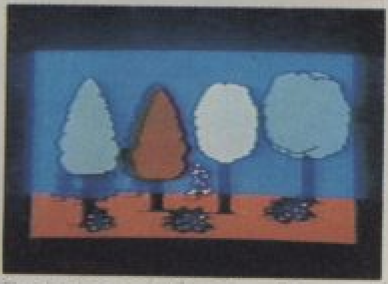


So the devil let Swelldre go? Doesn't look like her mood has improved by the favour.

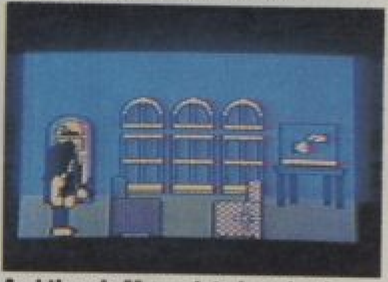




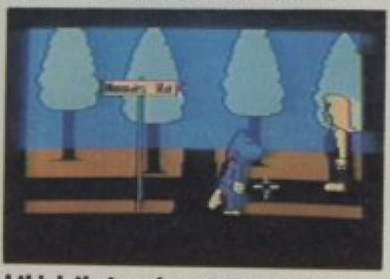




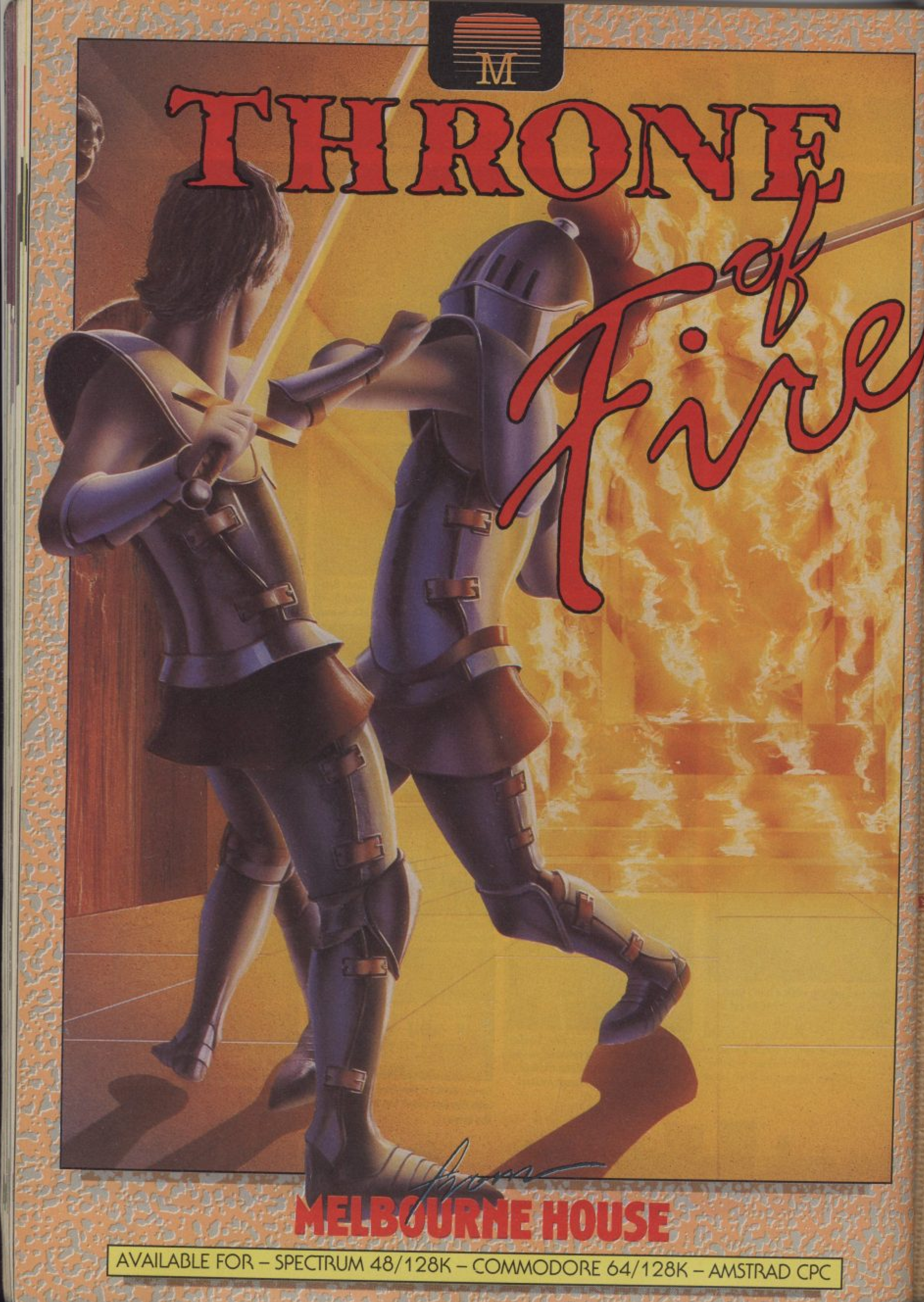
Too bad she can't just tune into a pleasant forest scene like I can when there's a need for tranquility.



And there's Marmalot changing her Turf again. She's never satisfied.



I think that you've seen enough. I have to follow along with Carnipet and Sissalay, but it's time for you to return home.


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Screen shots taken from Atari version.
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Stifflip

A new game from Palace! It's enough to make your hair stand on end. After all new things from the people who brought you *Cauldron* and *Sacred Armour* promise to be really ace. C+VG took an early look at this surefire chart hit and can now bring you this up to the minute report from the Palace throne room!

By gad sir! These Binary Vision chappies are a bit clever. Not satisfied with the success of *The Fourth Protocol* and *Zoids*, they've come up with an absolutely spiffing new adventure called *Stifflip*. What or who is Stifflip?

Well, if you're a fan of those ancient black and white Fu Manchu movies, old detective films or even managed to catch the brilliant *Doc Savage, Man of Bronze* on TV the other month you'll get an idea. *Stifflip* is a combination of all the best-and worse-things about 30s thrillers, written or otherwise. It's full of larger than life characters — heroes and villains.

Old movies have inspired Rupert Bowater and Paul Norris to create this fun icon driven adventure.

Stifflip also uses the exciting windowing techniques seen in *Zoids* — but the whole game is much easier to get to grips with. As you can see from our screen shots the control icons are ranged down the left hand side of the screen while the main picture is a cartoon style representation of the location occupied by the character you currently control.

But enough of all this technical stuff. Let's take a gander at the plot.

For countless years British schools have conducted a gruelling regime. Cold baths, corporal punishment and over-cooked cabbage.

Whenever possible the British leave their soggy island for good, hence their pre-eminence as a seafaring nation. Far from home they yearn for the sound of willow against leather.

But their contempt for foreign languages has forced them to colonise other countries as the only way of persuading them to take up the game.

Now disaster looms for the bowler and brolly

brigade. The contemptible count Chameleon, master of disguise and sworn enemy of the establishment, is determined to succeed in his latest and greatest dastardly plot.

His sale of rubber goods, through mail-order ads in a civil service magazine, has lead him to develop the Rubbertronic Ray.

With it he threatens to neutralise the starch in wing-collars, loosen stiff upper lips and generally relax moral standards — leading to the collapse of the Empire.

Worse still, it will radically and unpredictably alter the bounce of a cricket ball. This bounder must be stopped!

That's where Viscount Sebastian Stifflip and his team of intrepid adventurers come in. They set off to the banana republic of Banarnian to find the dastardly count Chameleon and put a stop to his evil plans!

The story unfolds on screen in a series of cartoon strip like panels. You can see two at a time so you've always know just what you did to get wourself into such BIG trouble the move before.

You can talk to people, or fight them, and generally have a spiffing time. As long as you remember the British public school code — Pay Up and Play the Game!

If you try too many dirty tricks — these are allowed — you might find yourself batting on a sticky wicket.

As you move through the game the cartoon "pages" peel off to reveal new locations. A nifty gimmick this!

All this plus the Binary Vision windows which make the game so slick to look at and easy to play.

We can't wait to get our hands on a finished game — and we're betting that you'll feel the same way.

So brush up your safari suit, look out that MCC tie you've got lurking in the back of the wardrobe and prepare to keep a stiff upper lip, play with a straight bat and all that True Brit stuff.

Viscount Sebastian Stifflip

Englishman, eccentric and explorer — a comic hero in every sense. Though Captain of Cricket at school, Sebastian grew up in the shadow of his cousin Sylvester Stuffshirt, who trod on a mine in World War 1, ensuring three corners of a foreign field that are forever England. Always proud of his modesty, flying ace in the Great War, feared by his firends and loved by his foes and known by all as "The Yellow Viscount". After four years of tea at five o'clock, bandits at 6 o'clock and bed at 7.30, our have-a-go hero was promoted to inactive duty on the Stifflip estate in darkest Surrey. Favourite colours; red, white, blue.

Professor Braindeath

Was declared clinically dead over a decade before the start of our adventure. Fortunately he has kept going thanks to his "Sonneundwindhalter" — a solar powered bow-tie which can act as a windmill during periods of extended darkness. Keen to visit the tropics on account of "all that sun". Worked for many years on a device to put the middle back into doughnuts, and went on to apply the same technology to toilet seats until the bottom fell out of the market — has since become one of our backroom boys. Founder of the ACME corporation, Prof. Braindeath is living (?) proof that not all mad professors are bad professors.

Colonel Bargie (G.N.T. and bar)

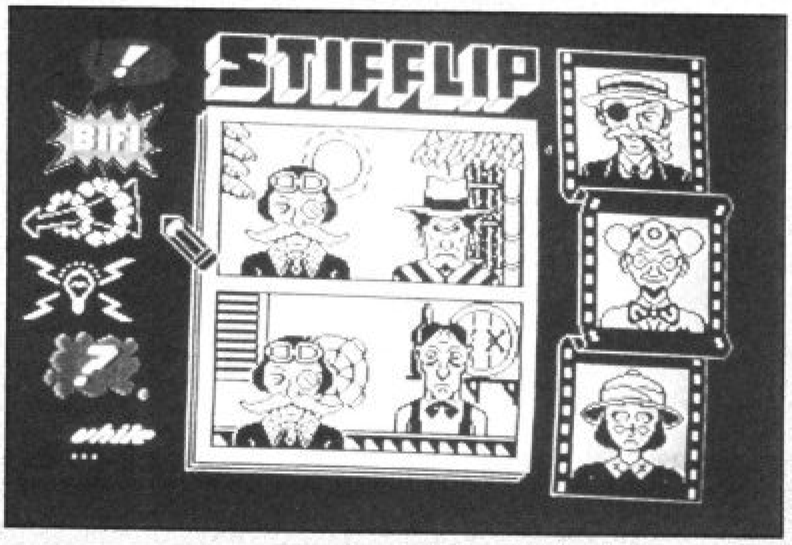
Of unknown wartime experience. Tall and dashing; blue blooded, yellow-bellied, red-eyed and green-fingered and known to his friends as 'RGB' on account of his colourful personality. Joined our adventure to avoid bad tempered creditors at home and not a bit persuaded by talk of South American riches. Pet hates: hates pets (especially creepy crawlies). Breeds clay pigeons.

Miss Palmyra Primbottom

Youngest ever troop leader in the Girl Guides and first winner of the badge for deportment. Has travelled the world collecting rare skin disorders and is the authoress of "The Young Lady's Companion to Tropical Exploration". Member of the Women's Temperance League for Clothing the Savages.

The Contemptible Count Chameleon

Started young by attempting to blow up his school and was severely reprimanded for smouldering behind the bicycle sheds. Later expelled for over-bidding at Bridge, since when he has borne a grudge against the Establishment. Founder of the Guide-dogs for the Deaf Association, and last seen by the captain of the Titanic disguised as an iceberg. A bad egg turned rotten — a man who can curdle yoghurt at twenty paces. He'd steal candy from a baby, he'd sell his own grandmother, he'd even say 'boo' to a goose. His villany knows no bounds. . .



On the left hand side of the screen shot are six icons which Binary Vision call Icon and Bubble control.

The first of these icons is as Chinwag, the second is the Fisticuffs icon, the third is Beetle-off, the fourth is Do One's Stuff, the fifth is State of Play and the sixth is Change Batter.

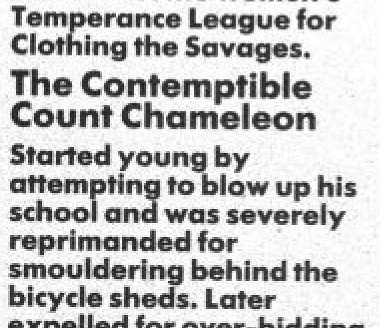
On the right hand side of the screen shot you will see these icons showing three different characters. The top character who has the eyepatch is Colonel R. G. Bargie, the second is Professor Braindeath and the third is Miss Palymra Primbottom.

In the middle of the screen shot there are two illustrations, the top represents the immediate past and the bottom the present.

In both sections, the Viscount Sebastian Stifflip himself is depicted. The character he is standing next to in the top illustration is fairly unpleasant.

The fact that he is next to the character in the immediate past means one of two things. Either he moved away very quickly by selecting the Beetle-off area, or Stifflip beat him in a fight. If Stifflip were to talk to this character, the sort of thing he would say would be "Now look here my good man", whereupon Stifflip would be attacked.

In the bottom illustration Stifflip is seen with a barman. If Stifflip were to talk to this character he would be likely to say something on the lines of "Nice bar you have here."



Rupert Bowater and Paul Norris keep a stiff upper lip in an abandoned bus shelter.

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	SPEC	C64	C64D	AMST	AMSTD
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C+VG's Arcade reporter Clare Edgeley braves London's arcades yet again to bring you the hottest news on the very latest new games to arrive on the scene. This issue she casts her eye over *Flying Shark*, *Psycho Soldier* and the excellent *Rastan Saga*.

► FLYING SHARK

The odds against you in Taito's *Flying Shark* are horrendous. Imagine one little bi-plane against the full and well equipped forces of an invading enemy. Though that's the beauty of arcade games — anything goes! And you'll soon notice the resemblance to *1942* — the game is planed on much the same lines.

At first I found *Flying Shark* difficult to get into. Not because it was tricky to learn — control is very simple — but because I spent far too much time chasing enemy fighters and not enough time dodging their bullets. Consequently, each game ended almost before I'd got started!

You soon get the hang of it though. Just make sure you keep more than half an eye on the enemy bullets which whizz over all corners of the screen, and try to take out the tanks and anti-aircraft guns before they can do too much damage. At the same time you're under attack from squadrons of enemy fighters, so your work's cut out from the word go.

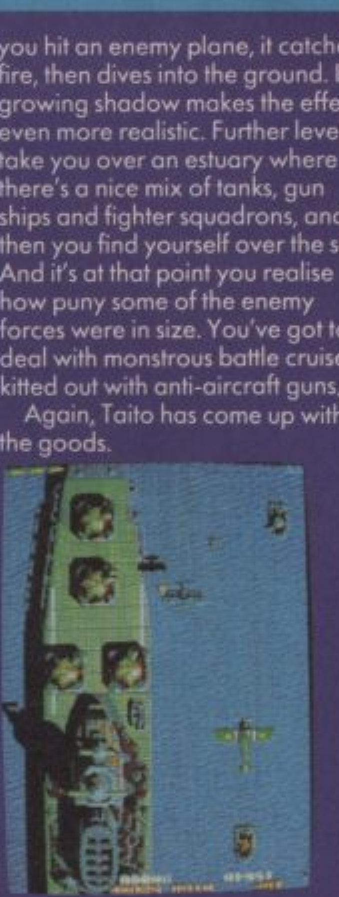
It's just as well you're provided with shatter bombs. These act like smart bombs, destroying everything within a large radius, but use them sparingly as you have only three to start with. Under more normal circumstances you'll have to make do with a steady stream of bullets, though, thankfully, the supply seems endless.

The attacking squadrons are colour coded and if you manage to shoot down the lot, you're awarded bonuses. An 'S' symbol appears when the red squadron goes down in flames and this doubles your fire power. Annihilation of the blue squadron gives you an extra plane, and a 'B' symbol occasionally appears giving an extra shatter bomb.

You can fly all over the screen, but it's best to keep to the bottom half, that way you've got more time to gun down the enemy fighters before they're on top of you.

The graphics are great — highly coloured and very detailed. I was especially impressed with the *Flying Shark*, it tips its wings realistically when banking from left to right and its ground shadow follows faithfully, growing smaller the higher you climb. And when you hit an enemy plane, it catches fire, then dives into the ground. It's growing shadow makes the effect even more realistic. Further levels take you over an estuary where there's a nice mix of tanks, gun ships and fighter squadrons, and then you find yourself over the sea. And it's at that point you realise how puny some of the enemy forces were in size. You've got to deal with monstrous battle cruisers kitted out with anti-aircraft guns.

Again, Taito has come up with the goods.







► PSYCHO SOLDIER

Psycho Soldier conjures up visions of an eight foot psychopath rushing round Rambo style, gunning down everything that moves. Imagine the shock when you're presented with a cute little girl, called Athena, armed with a mini-laser.

The game is from SNK in Japan and I imagine the title has suffered in its translation into English.

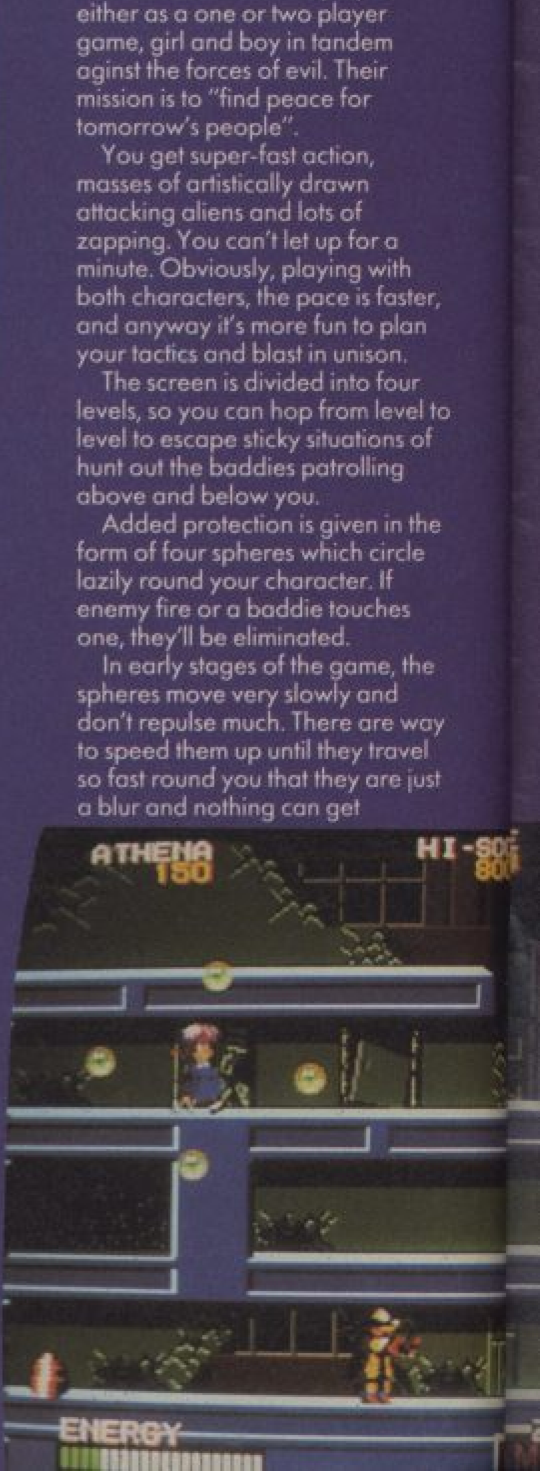
However cute, *Psycho Soldier* is no walkover. It can be played either as a one or two player game, girl and boy in tandem aginst the forces of evil. Their mission is to "find peace for tomorrow's people".

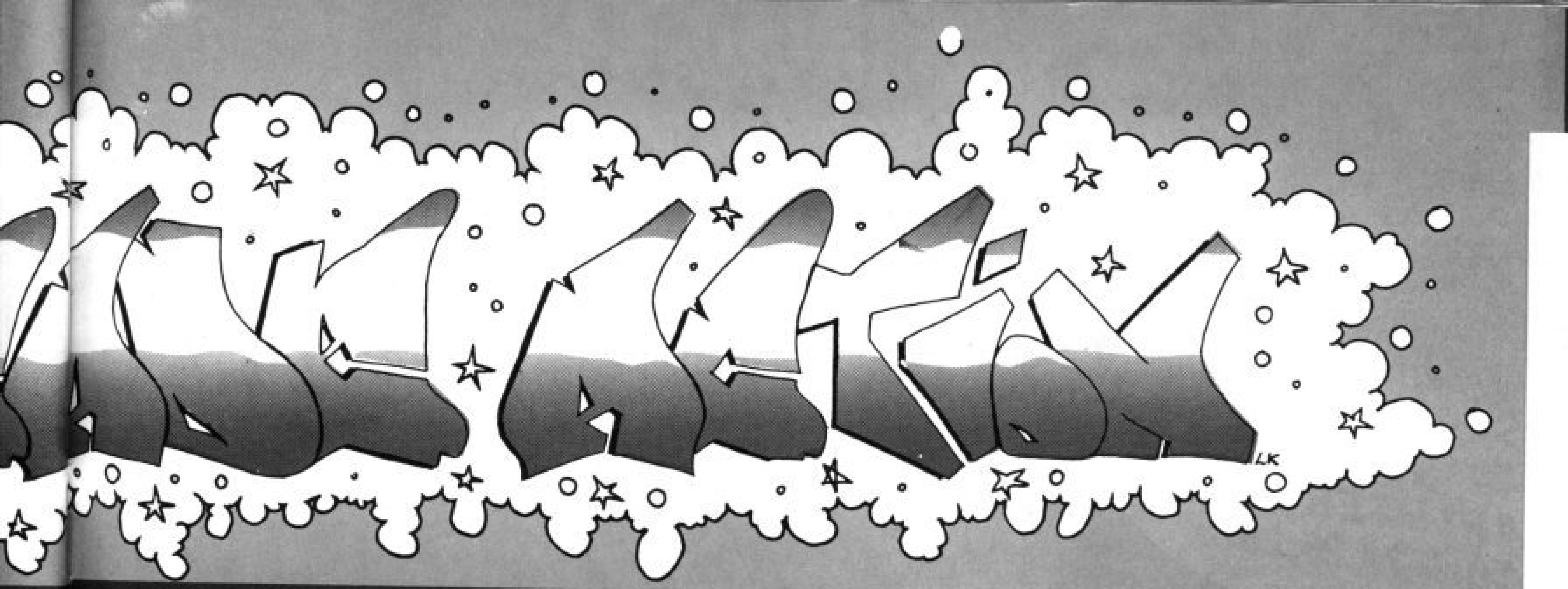
You get super-fast action, masses of artistically drawn attacking aliens and lots of zapping. You can't let up for a minute. Obviously, playing with both characters, the pace is faster, and anyway it's more fun to plan your tactics and blast in unison.

The screen is divided into four levels, so you can hop from level to level to escape sticky situations of hunt out the baddies patrolling above and below you.

Added protection is given in the form of four spheres which circle lazily round your character. If enemy fire or a baddie touches one, they'll be eliminated.

In early stages of the game, the spheres move very slowly and don't repulse much. There are way to speed them up until they travel so fast round you that they are just a blur and nothing can get





through.

Energy columns appear randomly — just dive through one and the spheres speed up a notch. If you manage to do this a number of times you'll be rewarded by a fast spinning, totally protective ring around your character.

The idea is to keep four revolving spheres at all times, and when one is damaged or disappears, make haste to collect another to complete the circle.

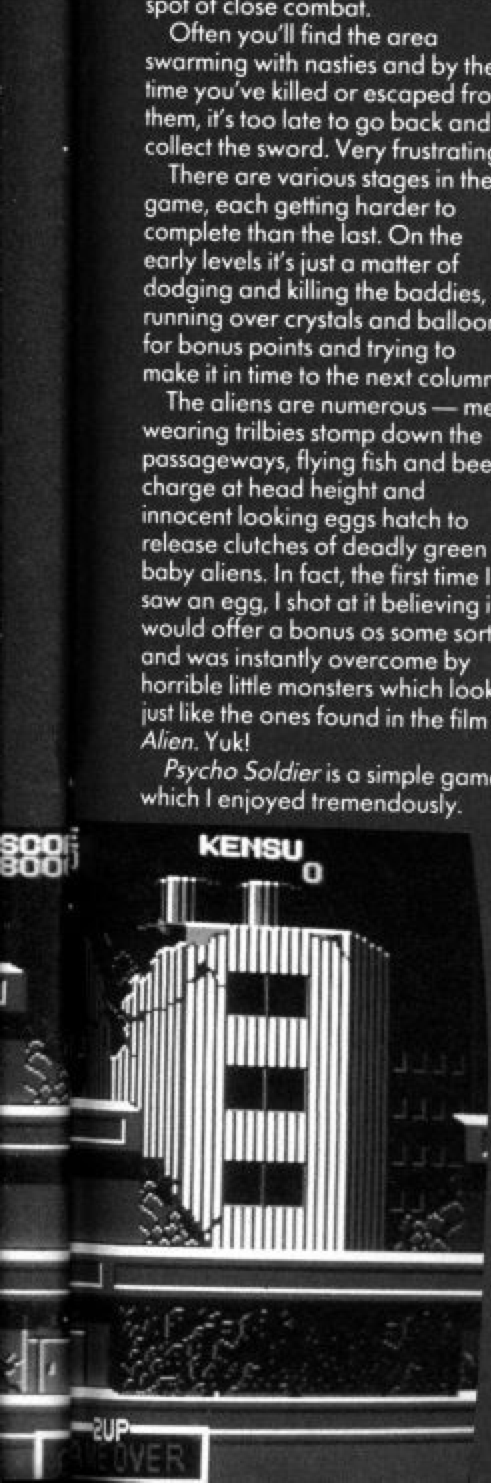
You can also add to your weapons by collecting swords and the like giving an additional edge over the aliens when involved in a spot of close combat.

Often you'll find the area swarming with nasties and by the time you've killed or escaped from them, it's too late to go back and collect the sword. Very frustrating.

There are various stages in the game, each getting harder to complete than the last. On the early levels it's just a matter of dodging and killing the baddies, running over crystals and balloons for bonus points and trying to make it in time to the next column.

The aliens are numerous — men wearing trilbies stomp down the passageways, flying fish and bees charge at head height and innocent looking eggs hatch to release clutches of deadly green baby aliens. In fact, the first time I saw an egg, I shot at it believing it would offer a bonus os some sort and was instantly overcome by horrible little monsters which look just like the ones found in the film *Alien*. Yuk!

Psycho Soldier is a simple game which I enjoyed tremendously.





► RASTAN SAGA

The coin-op of the month has GOT to be Taito's superb *Rastan Saga* — a battle of wits and cunning with a huge Conanesque character as the hero.

The idea is to bring back the head of the dreaded Dragon to the Princess of Siam — the Doragon is an evil creature by all accounts — in exchange for all the treasures of the empire. So, with the thought of all that lovely loot as prize money, let's get going!

Armed only with a sword, you're instantly set upon by bands of club wielding aliens. Easy pickings as your sword snakes in and out, slashing and stabbing, until they fall like ninepins. That early screen is a cinch but at least it gives you a chance to learn some degree of sword control.

Underground passages soon appear, some with concealed entrances. In these you may find extra weapons. Other passages contain ambushes and a host of bloodthirsty fighters — avoid these if you can.

On you stomp, stopping only to stab at vampire bats, centaurs and other mutant monstrosities. Some of these leave behind jewels which must be picked up for bonus points.

For the most part, you can get rid of the aliens fairly easily. If necessary, forget about your sword and jump over them, hopefully to leave them far behind.

Cliff walls are soon reached and these you can shin up using the ropes which dangle for just that purpose. Rivers must be negotiated by hopping from rock to rock, and chasms must be crossed by swinging on ropes, Tarzan-style. Most of the hazards require careful timing in order to cross unscathed.

You have three lives, they are lost when the stamina grid reaches zero. Even if the enemy does manage to get the better of you in a fight, you won't die instantly if your stamina rating is high.

There are objects you can pick up to reduce the damage from enemy attacks. The Mantel reduces enemy damage by 50 per cent, the Shield also affords some protection, and the Axe, Hammer and Fire Sword increase your fire power and to your fighting skills.

The Fire Sword, for instance, shoots flaming bolts at the aliens so you can stand at a safe distance to kill them.

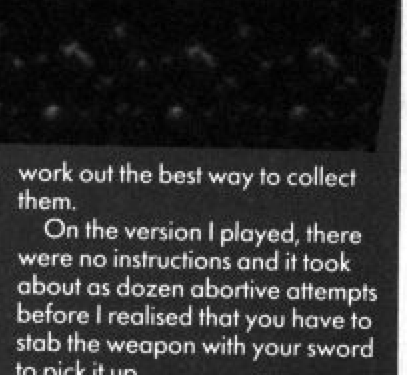
The bad news is that it's difficult to collect the weapons! They are often placed in highly inaccessible spots and it takes several tries to work out the best way to collect them.

On the version I played, there were no instructions and it took about as dozen abortive attempts before I realised that you have to stab the weapon with your sword to pick it up.

Pretty tricky when you're dropping to the ground from a great height and the weapon has to be stabbed as you fall past it!

There are six levels in all, each with three separate scenes, containing a fantastic number of hazards and aliens, and some wonderful graphics which are brilliantly drawn and very realistic.

Rastan Saga is fast paced and the action doesn't let up for a minute. Highly addictive and very playable, the game has got all the ingredients to make it a winner.

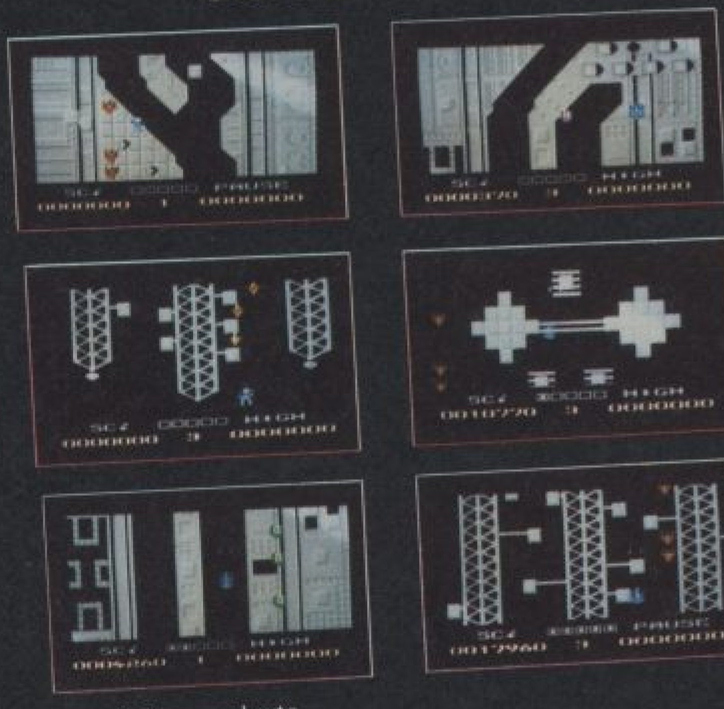


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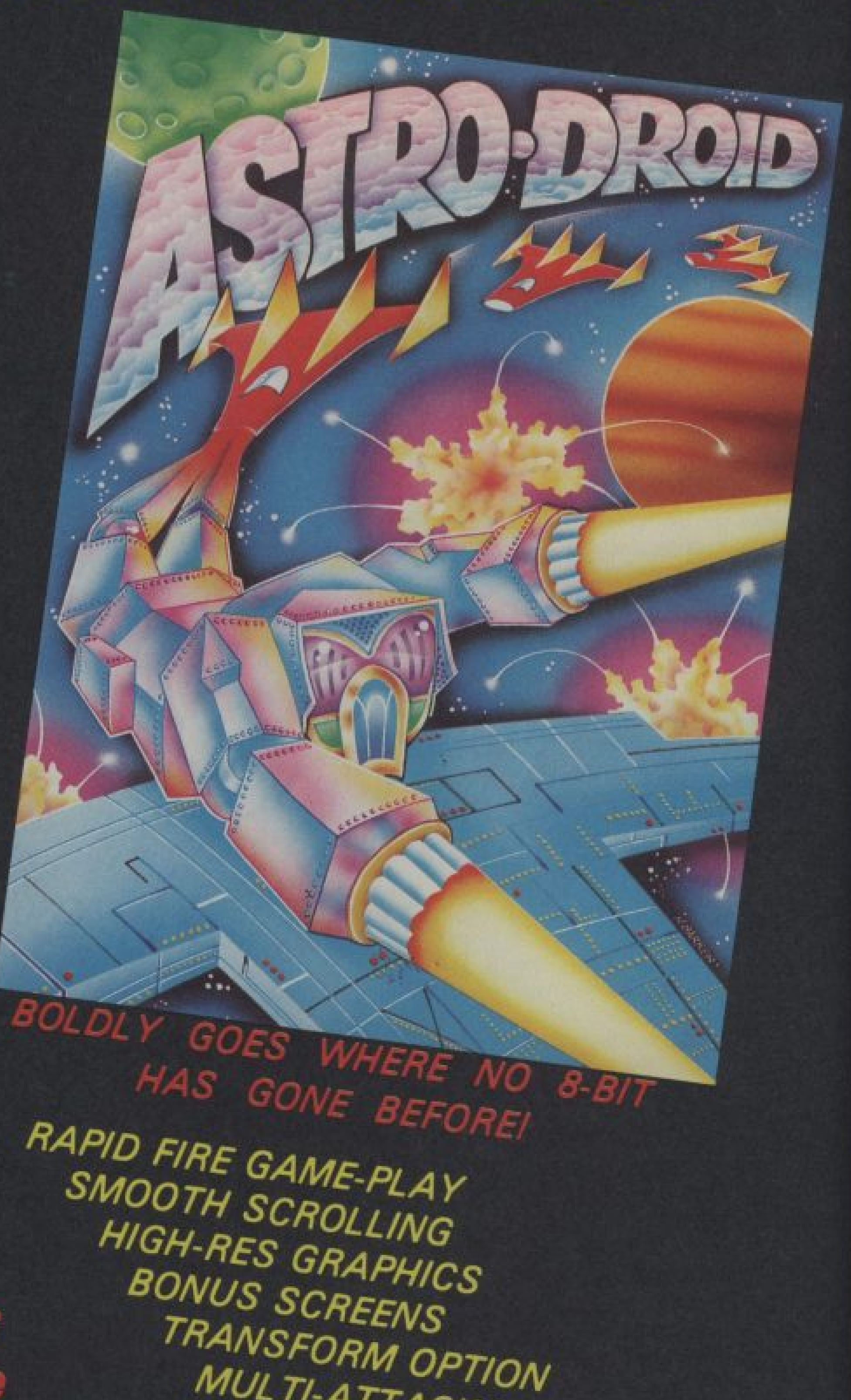
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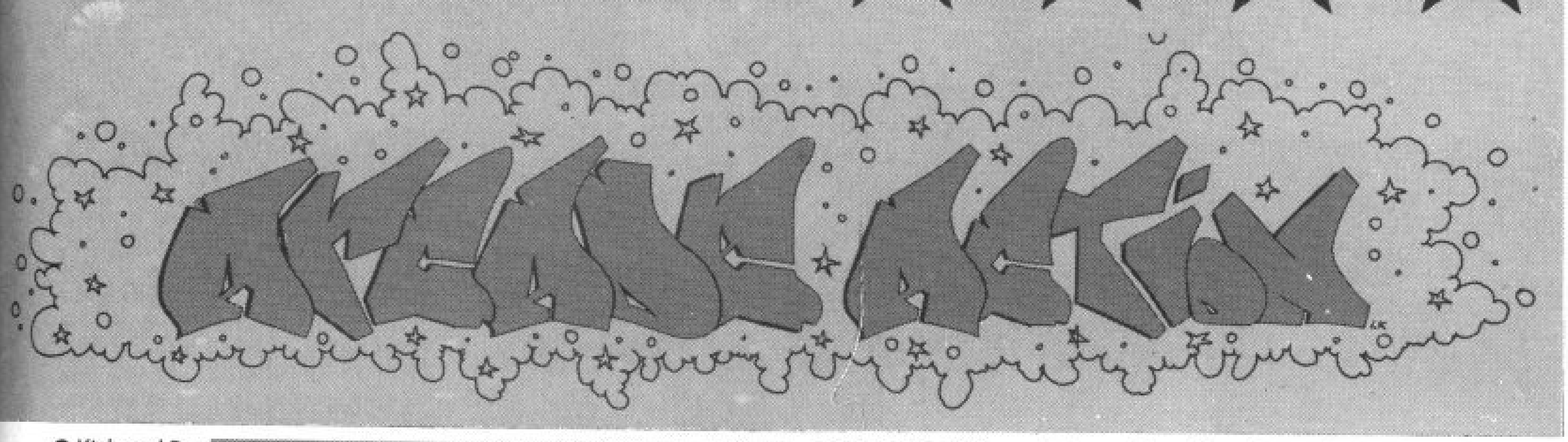
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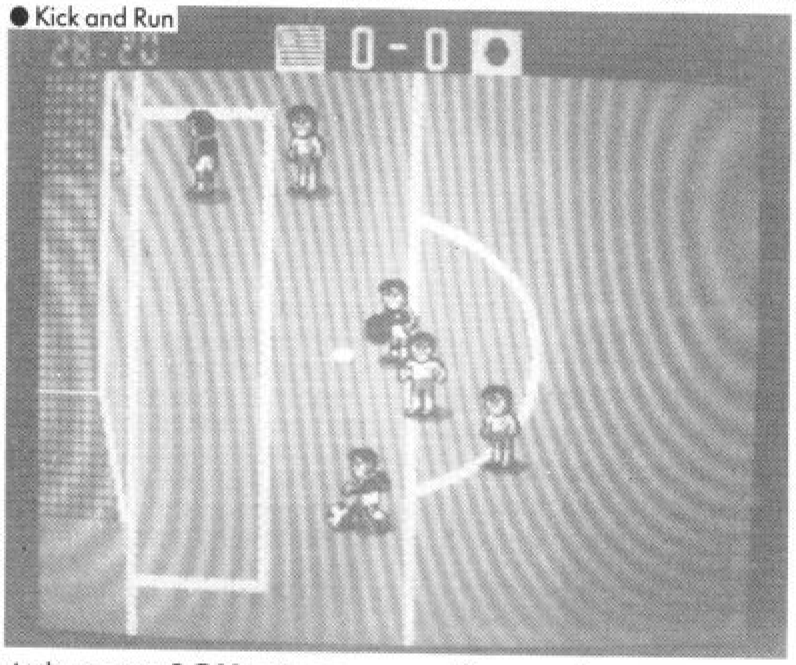
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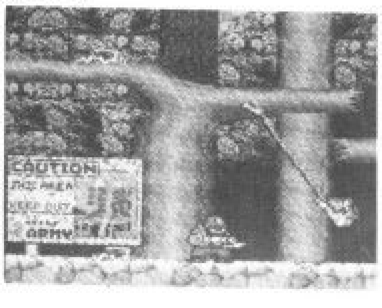
At the recent **AOU** coin-op expo held in Japan, a number of new games were on show, which should be filtering through to the UK over the next few months.

We've already had a look at Psycho Soldier, Rastan, Saga, Flying Shark and Exerizer but here's news of a few others.

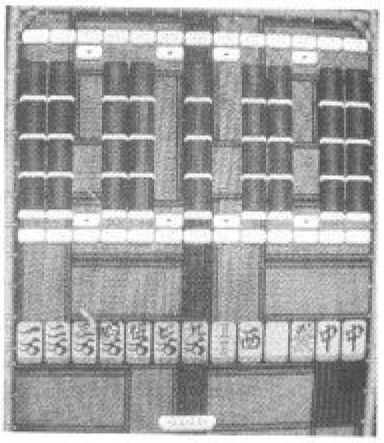
● Two new football games, which we'll be looking at in greater detail next month are *Taito's* **Kick and Run** and *Universal's* **American Soccer.** Though *Taito's* game is English soccer and *Universal's* is the American version. I'm putting my money on *Kick and Run* which is a far more detailed and exciting game to play.

● **Capcom** has two new games out — **Top Secret,** and **Bionic Commandos.** don't know anything about **Top Secret** but **Bionic Commandos** looks lot of fun. You are part of a special commando unit out to thwart the baddies, and to help in your task you've been kitted out with a bionic arm!

This shoots out to grab onto things, like tree branches, allowing you to swing across huge chasms and the like using your arm as a rope. The graphics are cute with lots of colour.



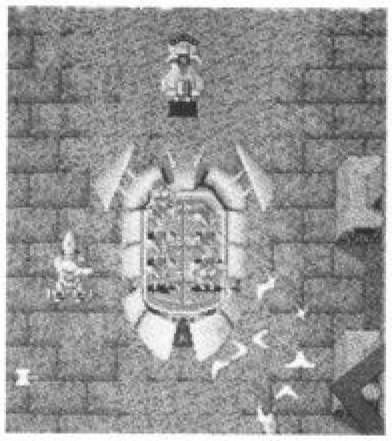
● ***Jong Bou** is **SNK's** latest release and is based on Break Out* and *Arkanoid.* It's one difference is that your platform, and the walls you have to break up, look like the playing pieces from a game of Mah-Jong. Should be interesting.



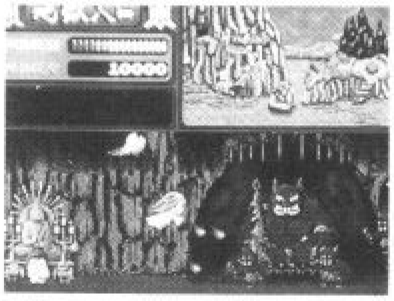
● **Psycho 5** from **Jaleco** is a game in which you have to rescue your psychic comrades from detention. There are five characters in the game each with different attributes — one being good at flying, the next good at jumping and so on. Lots of objects to pick up, traps to negotiate and baddies to overcome. It sounds much more fun than **Exerizer**!

● **Karnov** from **Data East** is apparently a little like *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* and *Super Mario Bros.* It's a horizontal scrolling game with you as the hero Karnov — a fattish balding creature, single handedly fighting off the forces of evil. Sounds Like the Ed! (That's enough of that! Ed). Lots of action, ladders to climb up and down, power-ups to collect and bombs to throw.

● There are also three other games which look very exciting from the brochures, but as they are written in Japanese I can't even begin to tell you what they're about! Two are from **Deco** and are called **Gondomania** and **Dragon Princess**.

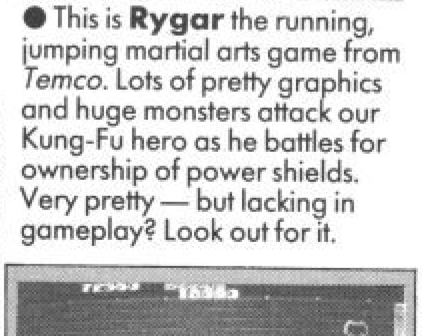


Gondomania is a shoot 'em up with lots of additional weapons to collect and the chance to join up with other friendly space craft so that your own model increases in size and power. The third is an unusual looking game from **Namco** with the main playing area taking up the bottom half of the screen, and the scoreboard and an extra playing window taking up the top half of the screen.





● This is **Rygar** the running, jumping martial arts game from *Temco.* Lots of pretty graphics and huge monsters attack our Kung-Fu hero as he battles for ownership of power shields. Very pretty — but lacking in gameplay? Look out for it.



Now, THIS is the game you're all going to be playing this summer. It's called **Solomon's Key** and it's totally and utterly addictive. You won't care what it costs to play, believe us! **Solomon's Key** is an awesome mixture of *Bombjack, Pengo,* and *Ghost's 'n' Goblins* and here at C+VG we reckon it's going to be the biggest thing to hit the arcades since *Pac Man!*

1)	**OUT RUN**	SEGA
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7)	**VALTRIC**	TAITO
8)	**NEMESIS**	KONAMI
9)	**SOLDIER OF LIGHT**	TECHNOS
10)	**SHACKLED**	DATA EAST

This list is compiled with the help of one arcade in London's West End, and is not necessarily the case country-wide. Thanks to John Stergides of Electrocoin.

THE BIG SCREEN

Street's the name — Ward R. Street — and films are the game. I inhabit the subterranean world of preview theatres, only surfacing to tell you what's happening at your local picture house. And I DON'T pull any punches. I praise the good — but the bad and the ugly better watch out!

Strange facts number one: **Little Shop of Horrors** (PG) began life as a grade-Z horror comedy, made in two days and a night back in 1960. It remained a rarely seen cult movie until somebody had the weird idea of turning it into a stage show... and a musical one at that!

Now it's gone full circle and the low budget black and white chiller has become a multi-million dollar all-singing block-buster!

Seymour is a nerd, trapped in a dead-end job, sweeping up in Mushnik's flower shop. Business is so bad that even the greenfly go elsewhere. But then Seymour discovers an unknown species of plant. He calls it Audrey II, after a curvy colleague who he secretly



● **Horror: "Hi, I'm from Inter-Flora."**

admires and who also longs to flee Skid Row. "It seems to be some sort of a fly trap," Seymour tells her.

Seymour puts his cute little bloom on display, and soon crowds are flocking in to take a look at this unique specimen. Business booms, but Audrey II is hungry... and flies just aren't good enough. At first a few drops of human blood are all that's necessary to shake up her stamens, but as she grows bigger, her appetite increases.

Can Seymour resist Audrey II's insatiable demands? Does a biking dentist look like plant food to you? Just where does the this jive talking plant actually come from? And will the nerd and the bird ever escape from hell hole that is Downtown, or is the dish somebody else's dinner date?

It's almost impossible to fault Little Shop. Rick Moranis is brilliant as the wimpish Seymour; Ellen Greene makes a great dumb blonde.

But the ultimate acting honours must be shared between Steve Martin as the dentist with a penchant for giving pain and Audrey II, one of the most brilliant puppet displays ever seen on screen.

●From gardening to DIY. Build a coal bunker, garden shed, an atomic bomb ... **The Four Protocol** (15) is just like **Blue Peter,** only you need more than a Squeezy bottle and make sure mummy helps you with the uranium.

Fourth Protocol shouldn't need any introduction. If you didn't read the best-seller, you probably racked your brain over the computer game. It's lucky old Michael Caine who gets to do it all for real in this cat and mouse tale of international intrigue.

So what is the **Fourth Protocol**? Quite simply, it's an agreement between Russian and America that they won't let off any atomic weapons on each other's territory.

Which is why it's a trifle naughty of Ruskie agent, Pierce Brosnan, to build a bomb in our backyard — perhaps he was miffed at not getting to play James Bond.

But Frederick Forsyth is miles from Ian Fleming, so instead of incessant action and gratuitous gadetry we get to see the spy as civil servant.

Power struggles in the upper echelons of MI5 result in Caine recieving a rough ride from his superiors, which is a pity because he's one of their top agents, even if he is given to unorthodox methods.

The tension mounts as Brosnan recieves his Airfix atomic weapon kit and Caine battles with red tape as he tries to trace him. It all culminates with some SAS heroics... but there's a sting in the tail as well. Just like the game, Forsyth's world of spies is a mixture of deduction and double-cross.

Fourth Protocol is a highly competent thriller, though there are times when it looks like film making by numbers.

●There are one or two realistically nasty moments in **Fourth Protocol.** A surprise then to find that **Trick or Treat** (18) a wholly jokey horror movie is considered more likely to corrupt in the eyes of the censor.

Once more we're in the realm of monsters and music as a dead heavy metal singer comes back from the dead. It's all a big joke at the expense of the moral majority, who insist that *Sabbath, Iron Maiden* and the rest are the devil's disciples.

The film makers have gone to the extreme of casting Ozzie Osbourne as a fundamentalist preacher! Bat lovers should stay away!

Nothing *too* gory in this one, but there are lots of laughs and and some great special effects. The best thing is that the film makers have kept their tongues firmly in their checks, and make one or two good comments about hero worship. Apparently Lemmy of *Motorhead* rates it — and he should know!

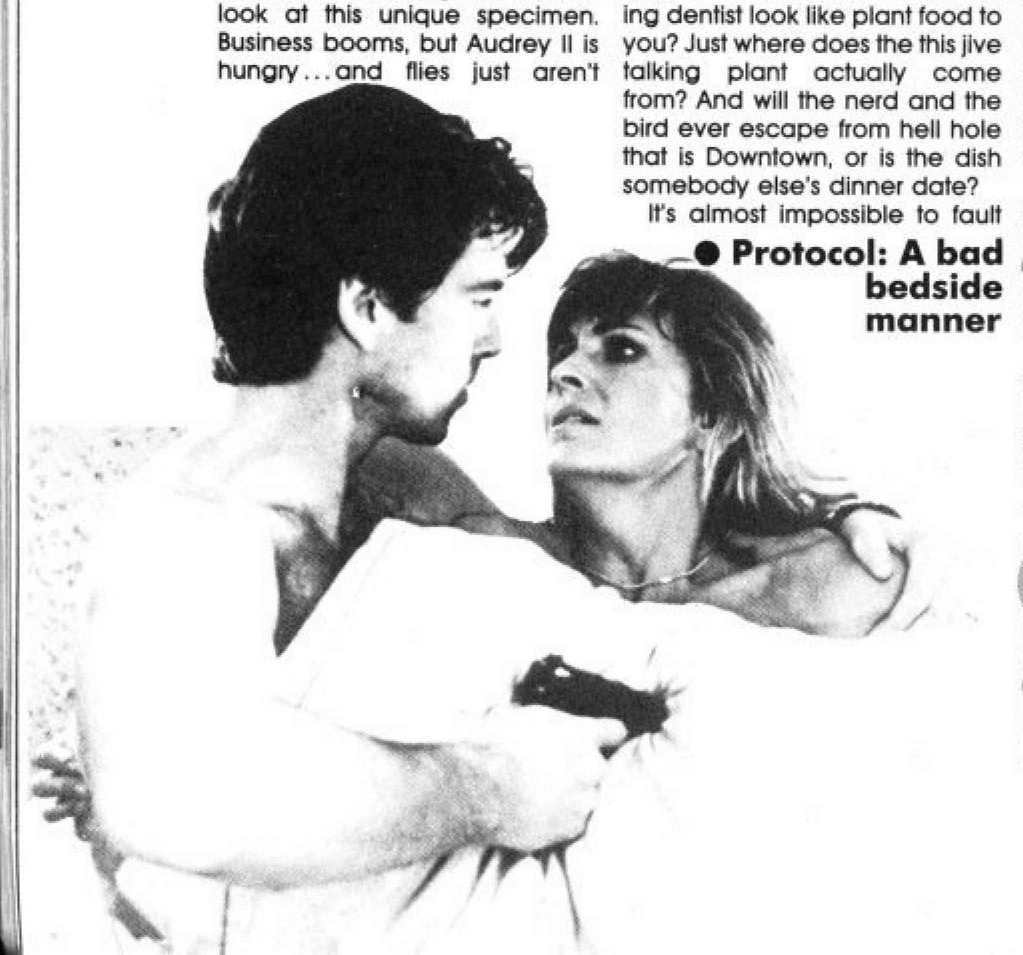
●On the same bill are a further fifty minutes of rockin' mayhem as **More Bad News** takes to the road. It's the **Comic Strip** crew back in top form in a comeback that's even more ghastly than Sammi Curr's.

Every band-on-the-road cliché is jammed into this furious riff of gag after gag. There's the reunion meal in the Indian restaurant.

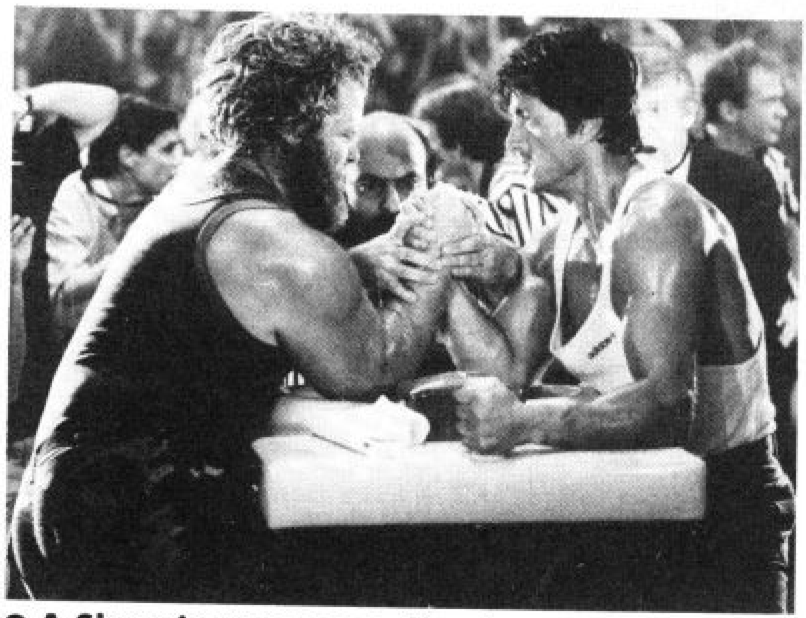
"Let's make it a hundred pints of lager while we decide what to



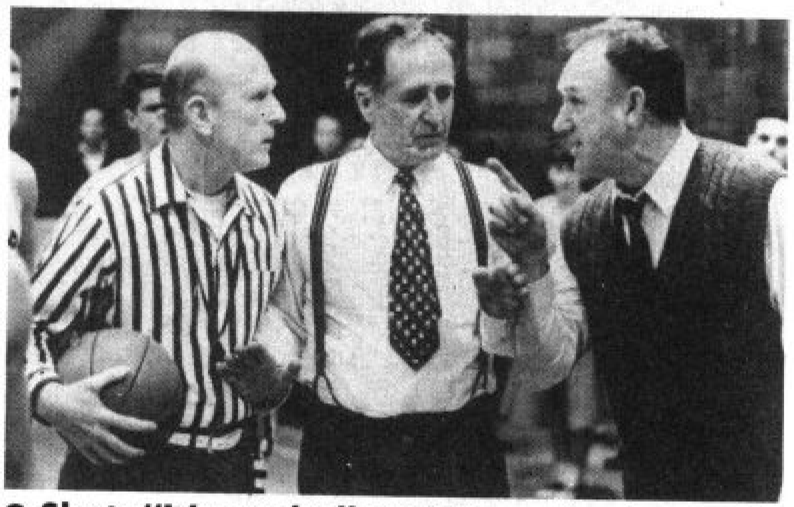
● **Trick or Treat**



● **Protocol: A bad bedside manner**



● A Sly grin goes over the top



● Shot: "It's my ball and I'm going home."

order," the obligatory game of wreck-the-hotel-room; and finally Bad New's apotheosis — an appearance at Castle Donnington. Never have so many bottles and bear cans flown through the air in such a short space of time!

One or two of the jokes don't quite make it, but it's still far funnier than a Cliff Richard gig.

●From dumb music to dumb superstars. At least, that's the way the public likes to see Sly Stallone. But we know better, don't we? Inside that muscular body lurks a deep, warm, human being!

Okay, so stop laughing. You can't accept it, and neither could the American public, which has stayed away from **Over the Top** (PG) in droves. Which is a pity, because this everyday tale of a truck-driving arm wrestler is an attempt by our guy Sly to escape **Cobra** image.

Even the arm wrestling is kept in the background until the grand finale; the first part of the film concentrates on beefcake's relationship with his son.

The kid has become a spoilt, upper class brat ever since dad walked out on the family and rich grandfather took over.

But now Stallone's mighty penitent. His ex-wife, who's in hospital about to undergo a major operation, suggests that Sly should collect his son from the military academy and get to know him as he treks across country in his truck.

There are lots of complications on the way and it all culminates in the International Arm Wrestling Championships in that mecca of good taste, Las Vegas.

It's a story in the **Rocky** mould, but with added depth and emotion. there are some genuinely moving scenes between Stallone and young David Mendenhall.

●Another out-of-the-ordinary sport, another Cinderella story of losers becoming winners, but beside **Best Shot** (PG — from May 22nd), **Over the Top** looks like a masterpiece.

I had really high hopes for this. It's got a great cast, including actors like Gene Hackman and Barbra Hershey. Better still, the director is a veteran of the TV classic, *Hill Street Blues*. But somewhere along the line something went wrong and instead of tension you get a lot of pretty pictures and a corny tale.

It's 1951 and a new coach arrives in Hickory, Indiana, to teach basketball, which is pretty much a religion in those parts. He takes the team of undisciplined losers and attempts to drill them into a winning machine, but runs into hick town conservatism at every turn.

The problem is that despite some great acting, the team starts to win too soon, and after that there's no real tension. Even the games are reduced to an endless succession of shots of balls bouncing into baskets. Only go see this one if you love the game.

STAR TREK 4

The plot of Star Trek IV — The Voyage Home **boldly goes where no screenwriter has gone before. Despite a heavy handed ecological message and a distinctly dodgy storyline the wrinkly crew of the Starship Enterprise manage to make you believe in all the implausible twists and turns of this lates Trekkie epic.**

Dedicated fans will love the movie, film critics will slam it, and the regular cinema visitor will enjoy it for the simple entertainment it provides.

To tell you the plot of the film would spoil it. But we can tell you that Admiral James T. Kirk actually does save the Earth and saves himself from a fate worse than death after destroying the Enterprise at the back end of *The Search for Spock*.

***Star Trek IV* isn't heavy on special effects — but it is heavy on humour. Lots more laughs than the other three films. A great — but obvious — scene on a bus after Kirk and Spock have warped back through time to Earth circa 1987. Spock deals out one of his brain-numbing Vulcan neck massages to an irritating punk with ghettoblaster much to the enjoyment of the other passengers. Wish I could do the same to people with loud Walkmen on the train!**

As you'd expect Spock gets all the good lines. After all, Leonard Nimoy did direct the picture. But you can't really escape the feeling that he'd been reading Douglas Adams' *Hitchiker's Guide* books while working on the film. Just remember the dolphins from the first book and you'll get the idea.

***Star Trek IV* keeps to the spirit of the TV originals closer than the previous films. Kirk even gets the girl — a long standing feature of the TV plots. Silly but lots of fun. See it.**

● Keep on Trekking: Kirk and Spock check out Starglider



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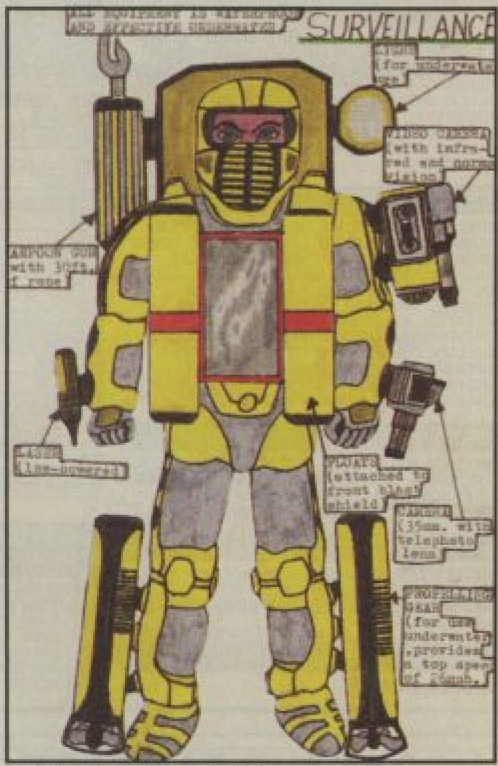
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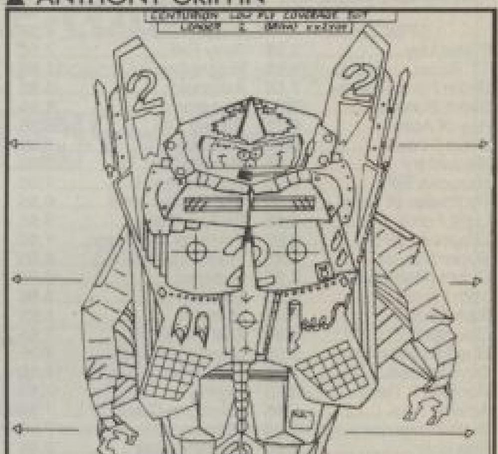
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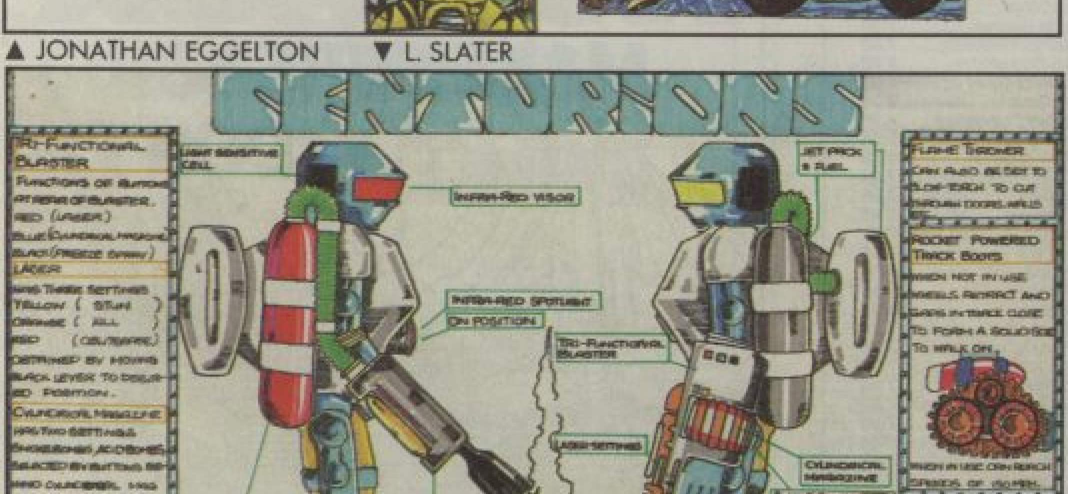




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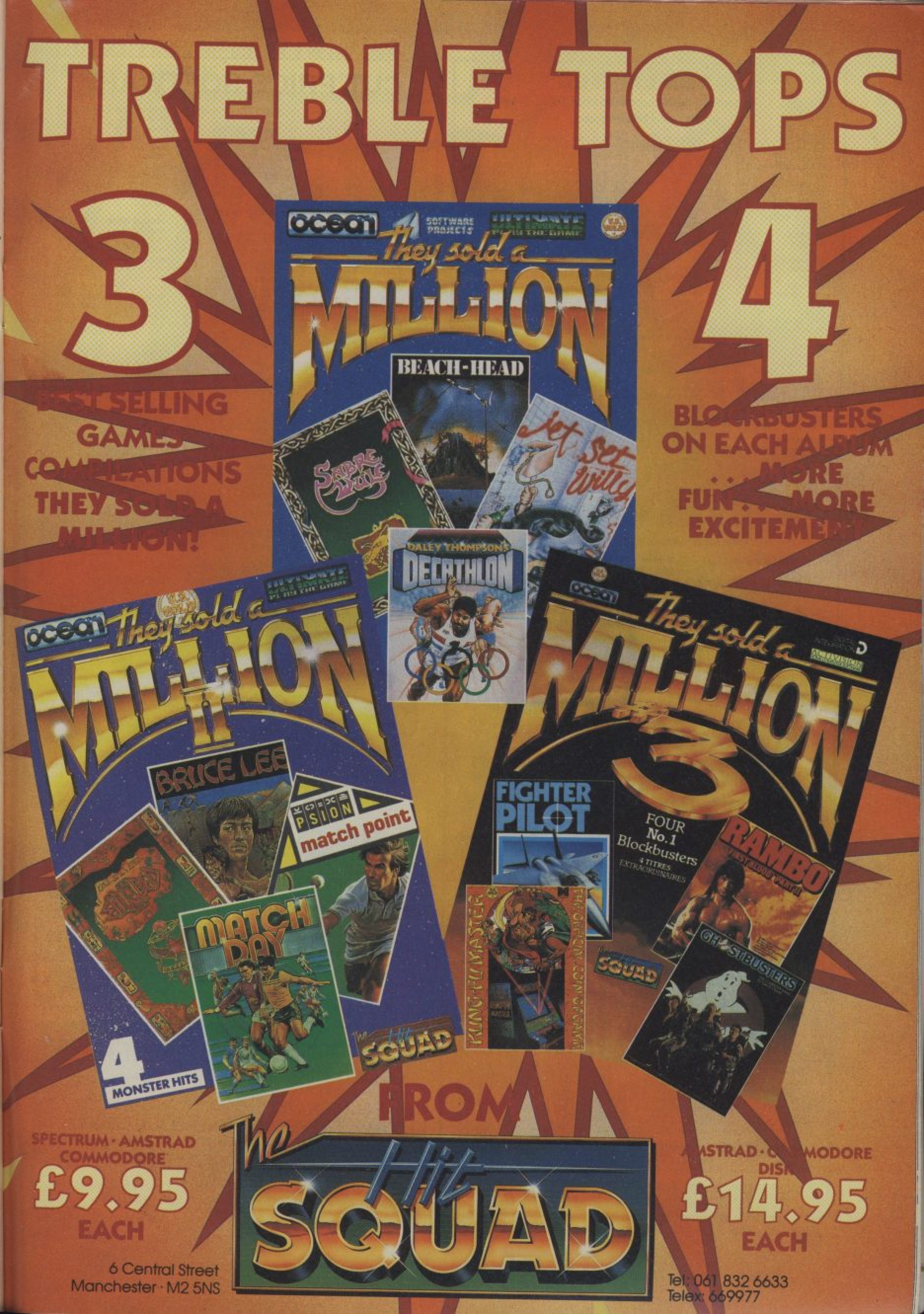


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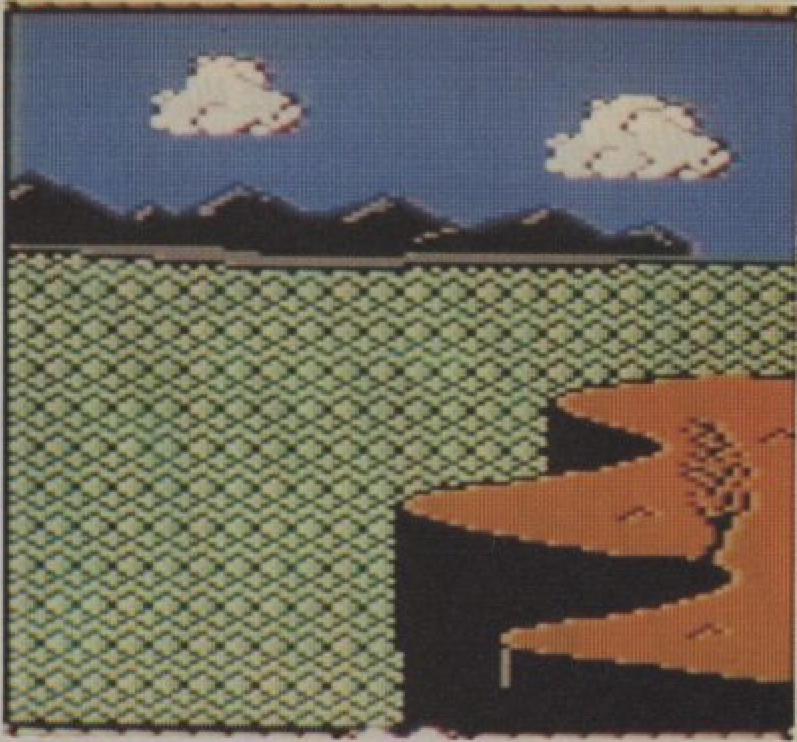
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C+VG STREET SEEN

Keep a firm grip on this mag. Readers of other inferior rags will try and rip it out of your hands to read our exclusive on The Shadows of Mordor, follow up to Lord of the Rings







Welcome once again to the mysterious and enchanted world of Middle Earth and *The Shadows of Mordor*, Melbourne House's follow up to *Lord of the Rings*.

The *Shadows of Mordor*, which follows the plot of JRR Tolkien's The Two Towers Book, promises more complex problems than the first game.

Lord of the Rings ended with the Frodo Baggins and Sam leaving Lothlorien, *Shadows* takes the story to the struggle at Shelob's lair.

The second game begins at the edge of lake nen-Hithoel, at the end of an uneventful journey down the river. Frodo and Sam have left their companions on an island in the middle of the lake, and have secretly gone on alone to continue their quest.

Somehow the intrepid adventurers must negotiate the desolate wastelands and cross the evil mountains which surround their enemies' homeland.

The way is dangerous and unknown.

One of the promised improvements of *Shadows* over *Lord of the Rings* will be the use of INGLISH for language recognition. This means you should be able to say anything and the computer can recognise sentences up to 128 characters long. Each instruction must in the form of "verb-then-noun."

But the programmers — Australian Beam Software — say if the command sounds right in English it will probably be all right in INGLISH.

When you start the game you have a choice of playing either Frodo or Sam. The computer will control the one you reject.

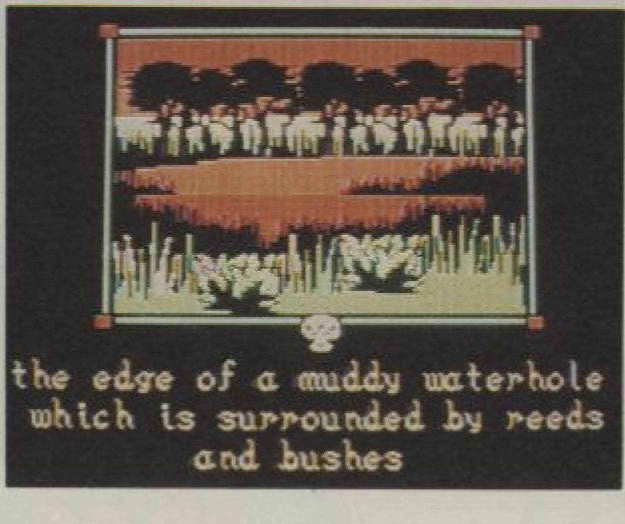
All the characters are rated for strength and stamina and can suffer in combat and from exhaustion.

The *Shadows of Mordor* will be released in June on the Commodroe 64 for £9.95 cassette and £14.95 on disk, Amstrad at £8.95 and Spectrum — including a special 128K version — for £7.95.









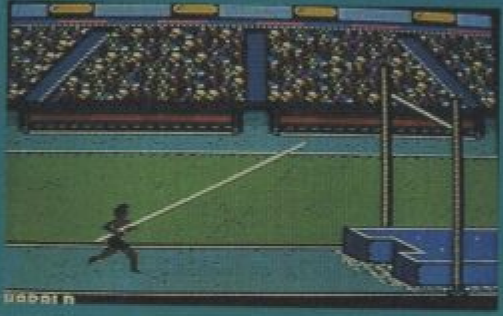


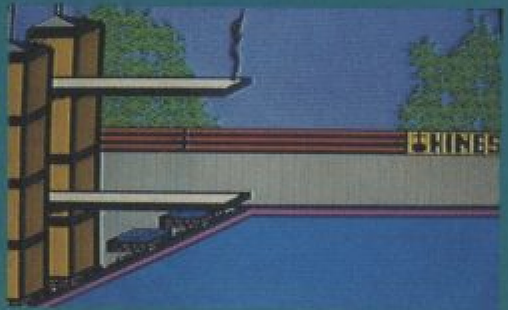




This is *Barbarians* — the game inspired by Conan and Arnold Jeezivegotalotamusclesnegger. Yes, you can be transformed from a five stone weakling into a mega hunk by Palace Software's newie. Over the next few weeks the shapely form of Page 3 girl Maria Whittaker and a muscle-man built like the side of a mountain will be appearing in the pages of the computer press to promote the game. Details of the game are still under wraps — just wait for the next month's *C+VG* to discover how Barbarians was born!

Here comes summer and the first of this year's sunshine sporting games, Anco's *Summer Events* on the C16/Plus 4. The six events featured are the polie vault, swimming, Kyaking, high board diving, cycling and steeple chase. There will also be opening and medal ceremonies and options to practice all the events. *Summer Events* is written by Udo Gertz, who was responsible for Anco's *Winter Events*. *Summer Events* will sell for £9.95.





Prepare to enter *The Fifth Quadrant*, the next offering from Bubblebus on the Spectrum (£7.95), Amstrad and Commodore 64 (£8.95 cassette/£12.95 disk). The Galactic Survey Vessel Orion is engaged on a mission to map and explore the galaxies of the Hercules Cluster. After 20 years the survey has almost complete apart from one small strange looking Nebula. The crew prepares to cross the intergalactic space by putting themselves into Sustained Low Energy Expenditure Process. During the crossing, Orion is taken over by a force of strange, alien, mechanical beings Zimen. When the crew re-energise, they find that many of the ship's systems have been terminated, all the computers reprogrammed in an alien language and Zimen everywhere.

This arcade adventure is set on a spaceship which will have approximately 250 rooms/locations and the player controls of four robot crew swapping from one to another as necessary.

The robots glide about under the control of the player. There are lifts which transport robots between levels, and matter transmitters which will move them between fixed locations. Many of the ship's systems, including the lift and the matter transmitters, can be reprogrammed assuming the alien language can be cracked.

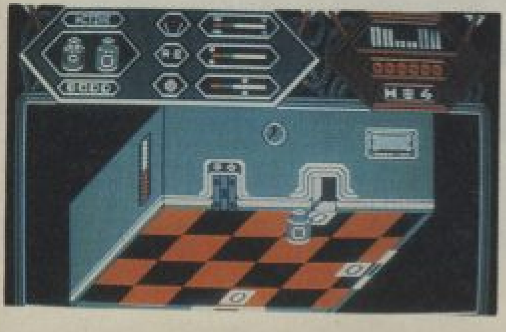
The Robots are:

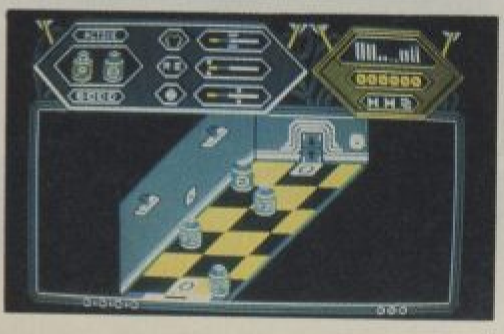
Slog — Ship's Captain and Pilot. He has a specialised compu-brain but is an older model He is slowing up and doesn't like it.

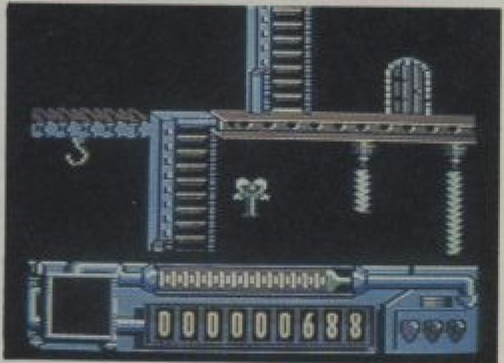
Plot — Ship's navigator. Brilliant at any sort of calculation. Bit of a loner.

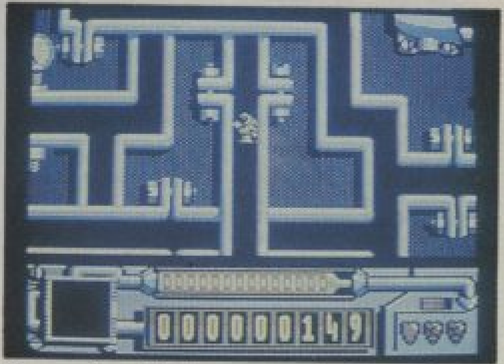
Knut — Ship's Engineer — Expert maintainance and respair man. Knows every zecometre of the ship, but has a screw loose!

Bodd — Crewman. Jack of all trades, master of none but a useful robot to have around. Looked down on by the rest of the crew, not very bright and a bit of a coward.









Remember Thing on a Spring, *Gremlin's bouncy little game from a while back? Well* Thing *is all coiled up and ready to spring in to action again in* Thing Bounces Back.

This shot is from the Commodore version of the game. Thing springs around the toy factory again which is packed with lasers, bounce pads, conveyor belts and teleporters.

Meanwhile also heading yor way out of the Gremlin stable are the Amstrad and Specturm versions of Krakout, *a C+VG hit on the Commodore 64. It's basically* Breakout *with a whole lot more.*

And for those of you luckily enough to have an Atari ST, here's a look at Trailblazer, *(£24.95) action at the speed of light. Well almost.*

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Yeah! We're really cookin' now! At last they've let good ol' Grill back into the hot seat and give your letters the heat treatment. Me? Hot tempered? You better believe it! There's nothing better than a real flaming argument. And this issue we've got a few bubbling under. Let's kick off with the Tony Takoushi controversy

● I must confess I am not a regular reader of C+VG but I find it an excellent magazine when I occasionally buy it. The reviews are excellent as is the News section giving up to the minute information on new software which I find very useful.

However, your Hot Gossip section, with that %$%$£*' Tony Takoushi, is totally NAFF. I never did like him and I think February's edition of this tripe went totally over the top.

I agree with his statement — "my computer is better than yours . . . " argument is pathetic — but he then proceeds to slam any computer which isn't a C64. How he could call the BBC "dead" is outrageous.

O.K. so it doesn't have as wide a variety of games as the C64, but the BBC wasn't originally designed as a games computer.

The original conception of the BBC was for it to be used in education, and in this aspect it has succeeded Fantastically. It is the most popular micro in use in English schools today, together with the Research machines. Where has the C64 succeeded other than as a games machine, at which it is ideal? O.K. so if you put a disk drive on it and a printer it can become something resembling a business machine, but which business has time to wait for the disk drive to operate? Fully expanded as a business machine the BBC is unbeatable and in the new Master form is FAR FROM DEAD!

Why don't you do us all a favour and get rid of this imbecile. I mean, just look at the letters you received last month where he criticised software houses of only producing clones of the same old games.

What a load of . . . I totally agree with the people who told him to open his eyes and take not of such games as *Paradroid and Uridium*, and which one of this three groupings would be put *Elite* in? Could someone please tell him that this is 1987 and someone has actually invented the wheel!

Stephen Wood
Lancs

● **One thing Tony isn't is Naff. He's been around in the games biz for a LONG time and knows what's what. OK, the Beeb may not be dead — but it's certainly not a red hot games machine. You must admit that. And this sounds like one of those terribly boring "my computer is better than yours" quibbles. I want red hot scandal on these pages not wimpish moans! TT stays put. He's the only one in the IDEAS penthouse with a bigger mouth than me! Now for some more TT bashing . . .**

● I am very fond of your magazine and normally am quite happy reading it. However there are one of two points I currently feel rather strongly about and which prompted me to write in.

Firstly I am sick and tired of software firms putting out compilations willy-nilly. I am rather fortunate in being able to go out and buy most new programmes I like the look of, but only just mind.

Many of your readers are young people however and will be saving up over many weeks for their games.

I guess they feel even more agrieved than I do when the same game is released on an el-cheapo compilation just a few short months later.

It's the people who buy the full price game who make the software houses as rich as they are, and they're content to reward us with a kick in the crotch.!

Obviously they have to make money. However, I think there ought to be a code of practise whereby software houses agree not to put games on a compilation for a stated length of fime after their release date, or to state quite categorically that they will never be included on compilations.

I wonder whether any would be bold enough to do this?

My other point is to do with Tony T. Your magazine has suffered immensely since allowing this berk to write whatever he wants in his own column. He's just so big-headed I'm surprised the rest of you have room in the C+VG office.

I don't want to know how many arcade machines he owns, or how many BMW's he managed to buy out of his royalties from a couple of games. It's not something the rest of us can relate to and many people will feel patronized and jealous. Get this lad back onto making the tea.

If you're really looking for someone special to grace your pages with common sense, then get Keith Campbell to do it. This man should be considered for a Nobel Prize, he's so significant.

I for one, would much prefer to be told how to kill a dragon with a paintbrush and a Christmas pudding than how many *Space Invader* machines someones got in his lavatory. C+VG is quite justifiably the best magazine in the shops. Here's to the next five years.

P.S.: Readers will probably be pleased to learn that Takoushi's BMW is in fact 'F' registered and has terminal body rot.

Duncan Roper
Wrexham

● **Good point here. But some compilations — like the recent Ultimate packages and the Five Star Games compilations were really good value for money. And not everyone can afford to buy a game a month, can they? Maybe we'll see the same thing happening in the games world as happened in the record biz with compilation albums outselling the singles. But let's hear some more views on the compilation issue. Back to the TT crisis — and I happen to know that he's got an I, Robot machine in the lav not Space Invaders. And you've obviously never tasted his tea! Even I of the cast iron constitution can't take it. C+VG would be off the streets for years if we let TT near the teapot. I can relate to BMWs in a big way. If you had a few bob I suppose you'd get a Reliant Robin or something. If you've got it flaunt it, that's what I say! Terminal body rot. I had that once when I was a mere droidling. Not very nice I can tell you. As for a prize for Keith he already has the C+VG long service merit award for puting up with editors cutting his copy! Meanwhile here's someone with a good word for Mr T . . .**

● May I say, well done Tony Takoushi? *(Oh, all right. Ed)* At last someone is willing to stand up for the MSX. Most of the British press have recently either slated MSX or ignored us MSX users — completely I am not including you as you've recently given MSX more coverage.

I just hope that Mr Takoushi doesn't come in for some criticism as most supporters of MSX do. May I also say, I agree totally with Mr Lucas *(January C+VG)* regarding MSX. It seems all the best games are being converted to the format, *Dambusters, Super Cycle, Gauntlet Spitfire 40* etc etc. So obviously, there is a large market for MSX games as it wouldn't pay for them to convert otherwise.

I certainly have no intention of changing from MSX to any other format, and judging by the lack of MSX machines in your for sale pages not many MSX users are changing either.

Now, how about a full review of Nemesis, it's a game so good that you might buy an MSX machine just to play it.

I help run a MSX user group called MSX Link and if any of your readers would like details, send a SAE to David Webb, 11 Ayscough Ave Spalding, Lincs. We will gladly reply.

Keith Neal
Lince

● **At last someone actually recognising that C+VG does actually write about the MSX machines. Agree with you about MSX Nemesis — a hot game no doubt about it!**

● Okay it's me, I'm back again and STILL moaning. The argument is

still this. A company cannot sell or advertise an item or product that it does not possess or exist. And to take money from individuals with the pretence of having that item is theft and to quote Mr Kaliber "theft is a crime". If a company cannot come up with the goods we are forced to wait on their terms. Can you imagaine the stink a company would cause if a programmer failed to return a game without writing or phoning?

As I said before, if a company cannot reach a deadline mentioned in their adverts, they have an obligation to let people know. I waited four months without a word, from a certain company until my game was replaced.

Can you tell us what Ian Foster and Jon Law of CRL are up to now, as I am still hoping, in vain probably, for *Cyborg* to materialize. Are they continuing with the game? Have they kicked it in the head?

How about a new section entitled "whatever happened to . . .?" and go and ask what problems programmers encounter.

Right that's it. Once again I've moaned, but your answer to my last letter was very reassuring, however the comments about piracy and theft I think were a little naive. Don't pull that five year old stuff on me — I'm six!

Andy Purnell
Bristol

● **Well good news, Andy. After months of waiting — it's almost a year since our Cyborg cover — the game has arrived. We'll review it in next month's issue.**

● Before Christmas I had a Commodore 64 and nearly 100 games for it including classic games such as *Ghosts 'n Goblins, Green Berret and Elite*. Until the appearance of the Arari ST and Amiga, I was mildly satisfied with my 64K although its games quality never came near the coin ops. When I saw the reviews of the super computers in your magazine, I gave up playing 64 games and put an ad in the paper to get rid of it, because I realised I had gone beyond the simplicity of eight bit computers.

When I had enough money I purchased an Atari ST, because of its enormous capabilities and the amazing price. Now that I have it I am even more impressed and I would like to inform people who are undecided in buying a computer that you cannot get your hands on a better computer.

I would also like to offer a small amount of advice to the publishers of C+VG. Due to the growing number of people seeking the ultimate in computer games — by buying an Atari ST — it would be advisable to review more software for this machine. I do not expect to see CBM, Spectrum and Amstrad owners being deprived, but, maybe you could add on more pages or drop one of the unpopular areas of your magazine ie Sticky fingers, Extra Bits, and War Games.

I do realise you have reviewed a small amount of games for the ST, but please make it a regular feature.

I am sure that other computer owners like reading super computer reviews — I am speaking from experience.

Anon,
Dublin

● **What about all the tons of ST stuff we've been looking at recently. Sticky Fingers was a one off article and our War Games features are enjoyed by many readers. Extra Bits is a crucial add on to C+VG. Unpopular? Rubbish! Apart from that the ST will be a regular feature in this mag from now on. We've even persuaded Kaliber to cough up and get one for the penthouse.**

● I read the interview with Gerry Anderson, I was transported back to my childhood (I confess to being one of your mature readers!!) I would like to point out that the photo you labelled Lady Penelope and Jeff Tracy is in fact Venus and Steve Zodiac from Fireball XL5, a series which kept me glued to the screen (albeit a black and white one). I forgive you this as I doubt whether you were old enough to se the original series. This is a compliment, Tim.

Roz Bridgeman
Stroud

● **Yeah, the person who mixed up the captions is now in solitary confinement on Tracy Island! How anyone could get them wrong is beyond me. But did you know that The Ed claims to have actually met Steve Zodiac? Is he OK in the head or what? But no, Tim insists that Steve came round for tea one day and it's one of his claims to fame. I think his brain has finally frazzled.**

● I own an Atari 800XL computer. No, stop laughing. It's not that funny. What? You weren't laughing. Well that's a suprise. It seems to me that whenever I mention to somebody that I own an Atari Computer I have to endure five minutes of hysterical laughter, and then a further twenty-five minutes of them telling me how great the Commodore 64 is compared to the Atari.

The fact that they probably have never seen the Atari in action is neither here nor there. I'd just like to take this opportunity to say that I COULD NOT CARE LESS! I am not interested in how good the graphics are, or how great the sound is, I already know these things and I do not wish to hear them everytime I try to discuss my computer with somebody else.

Still, that's not why I am writing to you now. The reason that I am writing to you seems to be the same reason that every other Atari User writes to you, can you guess what it is? That's right, not enough Atari game reviews.

I know what your excuse is, "the software houses just don't send us the software", PAH! Have you ever thought that the reason they don't send you software is that they think that you are not interested.

Perhaps you could send Big Red around to "explain" how you feel (now, before I go any further I feel I must explain that I do not believe in the Bug Hunters, they are just the by-products of a warped imagination.)

Why don't you discuss your problem with Atari User? They seem to have no problem getting software and have reviewed some very good games as well as the budget titles that you seem to favour.

Another thing I have noticed about your magazine is that in your *Mailbag* section, which I think is very good but is far too short (I know, lack of space), whenever somebody writes, "I know you won't print this letter . . .", It always seems to get printed, so I think I'll give it a try.

I know you won't print this letter as some might think that it is highly critical. However, I feel that it is important that I should be able to air my views in such a way.

Oh, just one more thing. I hope that you will ignore my spelling mistakes, because I try my best to ignore yours, and the pictures being put in up-side down (you even managed to put a picture of an Alien in one issue up-side down, apologize for your mistake in another issue, and then re-print the same picture in another issue up-side down again).

I also ignore the pictures being in the wrong place (Big Red upsetting the table with all the pictures on, HA!), and your occational Atari listings which seem to have chunks missing and are full of errors which nobody seems to have spotted (I thought spotting errors was what the Bug-Hunters were supposed to do. OH, I forgot, they are not real are they?) Yes, I ignore these things and do not mention them because they are of little importance to me, but if the attitude of the "Number One Computer Mag." and various software houses does not improve I shall inform your superior, Miss M. Ravenflame, who does exist, of these errors.

Thank you for allowing me some of your precious space which could have easily had an advert for a game which will come out next year if we're lucky on it.

Sean Roblett Bedfordshire

● **Don't believe in the Bug Hunters? You'll be telling me that you don't believe in Santa next! And it's Ms Ravenflame, if you don't mind! How would YOU feel if I said I didn't believe in the Atari? Which we do. The Atari is a much loved machine in the C+VG office. And yes we would like to see more Atari software. so software houses please take note. And I guess you've spotted the Greyfell/Shockway Rider picture mix up in March issue. Thank you VERY much Mr Printer! Another fine mess you've got us into!**

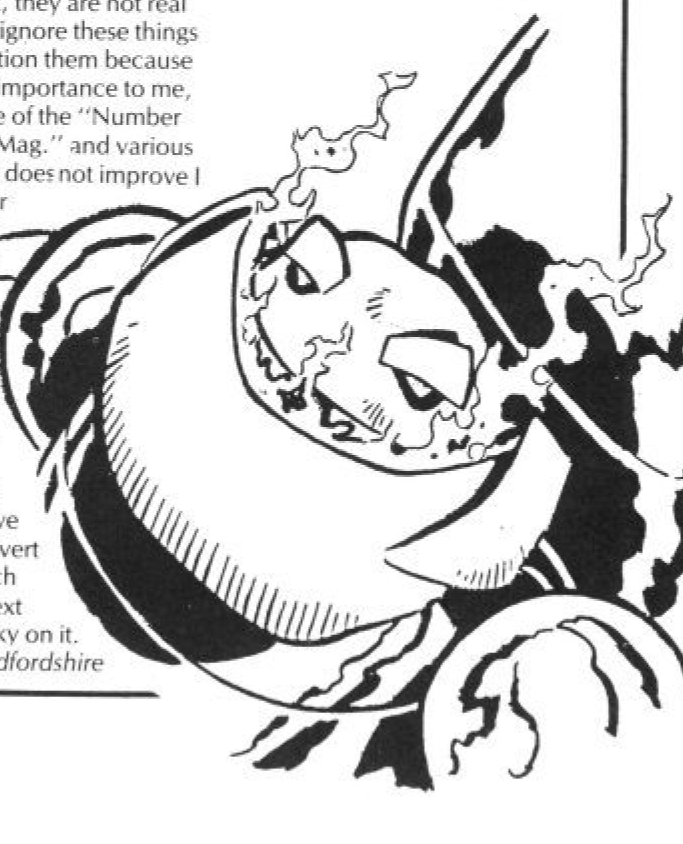
● I recently read in *Popular Computing Weekly* that many major software companies were having problems finding enough new top class assembly language programmers. Well, I have a solution, why don't these software houses employ a group of people who they can teach, train etc to become top programmers?

Obviously some "entrance exam" would be necessary to test the candidates abilities. Then this elite (forgive the pun) crew could be taught to program by the top programers in each software house. For example Chris Butler, Tony Crowther — the king of scrolling shoot-em-up's — and so on. Come on software houses, if you can't find the talent create yuour own — give us mere mortals a shot at the pot of gold.

Oh, by the way, any companies reading this letter and decide to take up my idea then include me in your list of possible number one programmers as I can program in assembley for Z80,6502, and 68000 and I believe I have the hidden talent imagination, flare etc that just need bringing out by you. So give us a chance, eh?

Mark Hula
Bristol

● **You're full of good ideas this month aren't you! Here's another from Mark. Well, if there's a software house or programmer reading this who likes the idea we're waiting for your reply.**

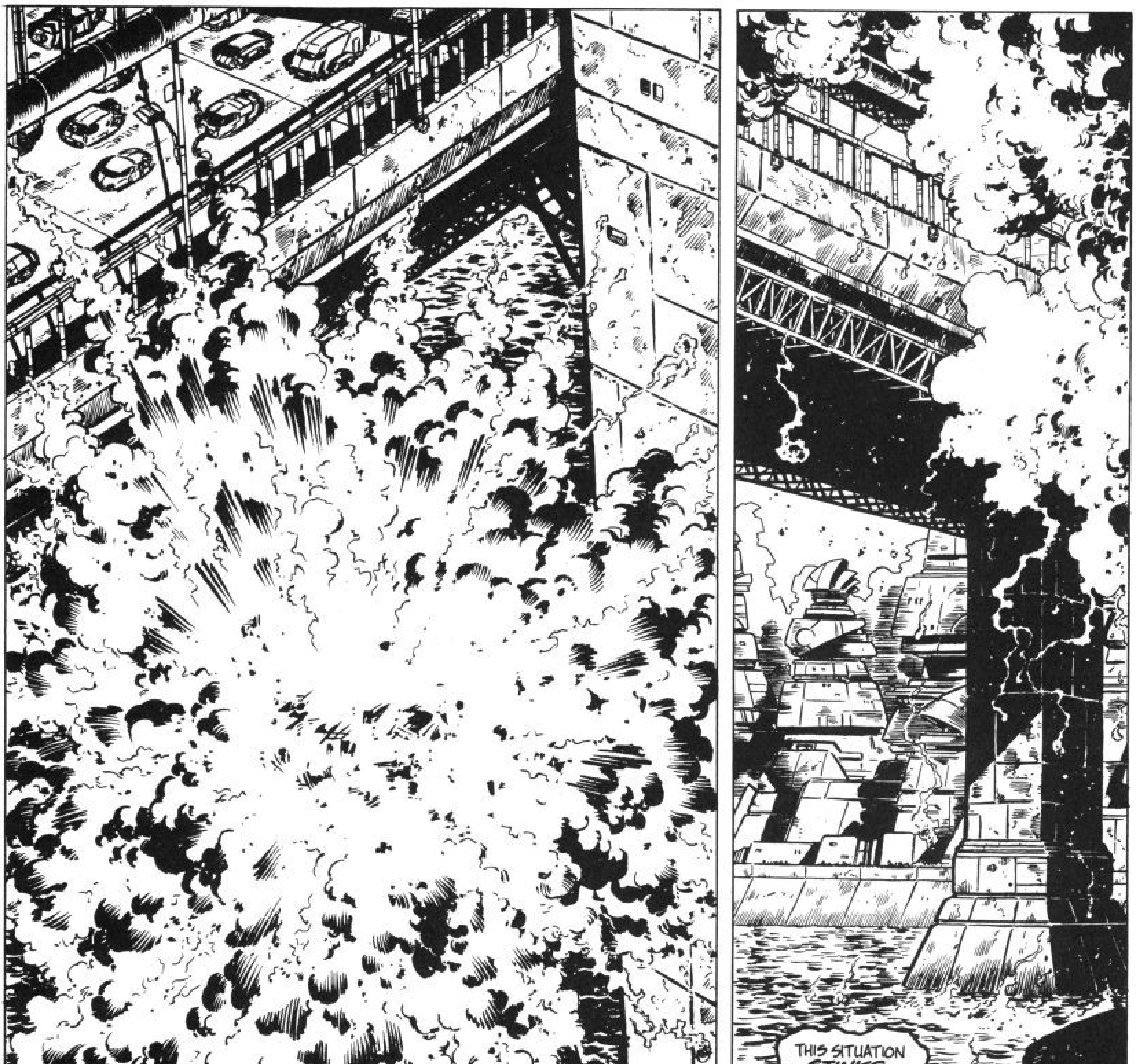




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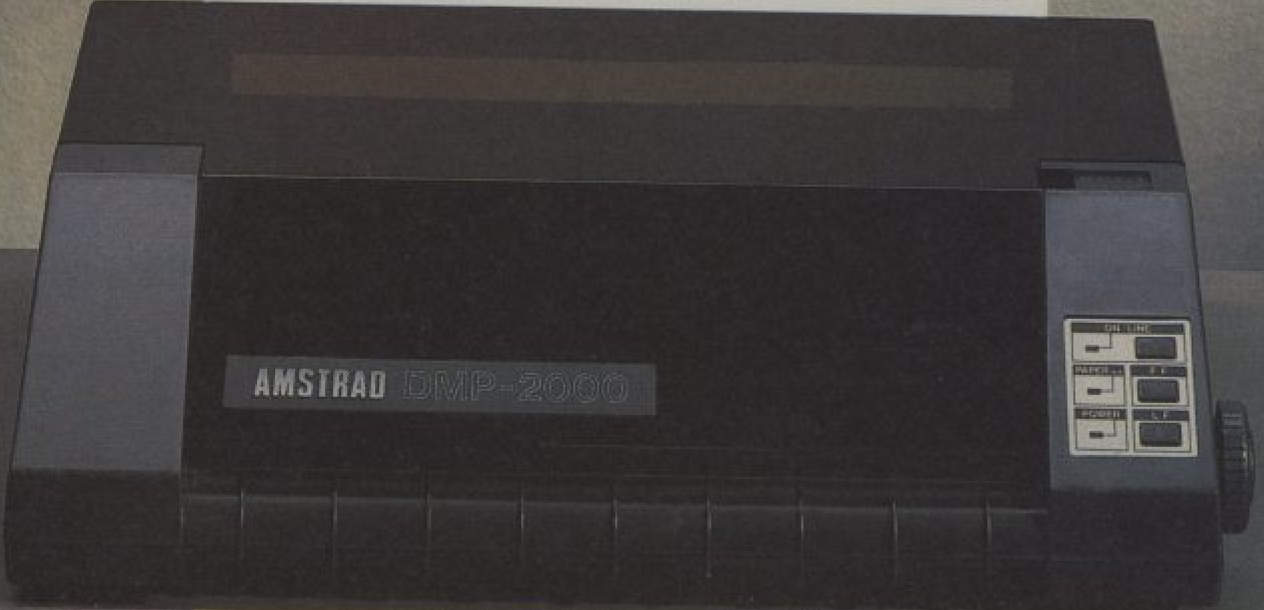
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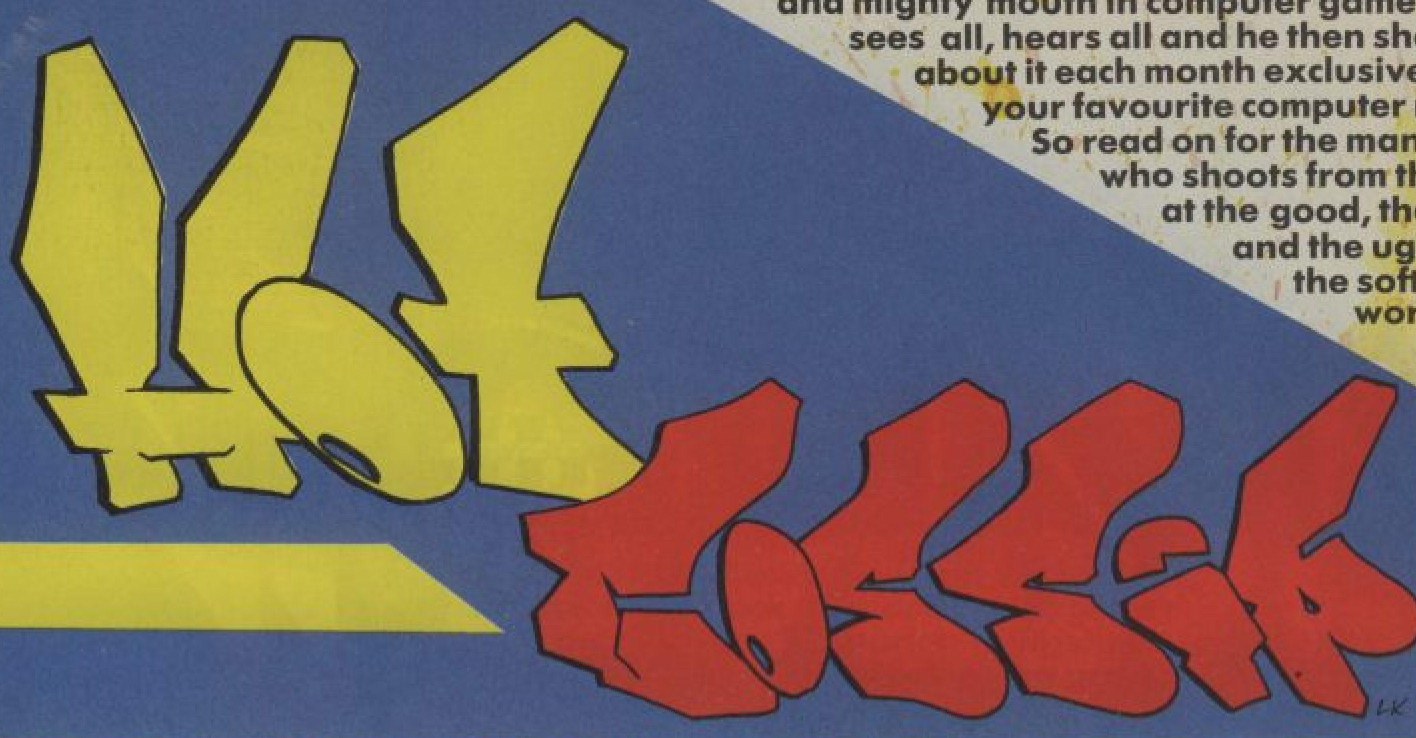
Why is this man looking so happy? Is it because he's cuddling up to shapely model Maria Whittaker? Is it because he's having a good laugh at the barbarian's dodgy hairstyle? He's smiling because he's just found out about the contents of the special Swords and Sorcery issue of C+VG!

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C+VG's Hot Gossip ace Tony Takoushi has the biggest eyes, nose and mighty mouth in computer games. He sees all, hears all and he then shouts about it each month exclusively in your favourite computer mag. So read on for the man who shoots from the lip at the good, the bad and the ugly in the software world.



This month's offerings are two very tasty pieces of Atari ST software, the official *Crystal Castles* and Xtron a one megabyte shoot-'em-up in the classic mode.

Crystal Castles is a very professional and definitive version of the arcade original. You take on the role of Bentley Bear and have to wander around various castles collecting gems, honey and hats while avoiding, amongst other things, the dreaded trees (oh, no not the TREES!), bee hives, and a little spell thrower.

You can play with joystick or mouse and there is an option for one or two players.

The other really nice part of such a well presented game is its playability, it plays fast.

The game has a really zippy tune which makes you want to bounce up and down in your chair.

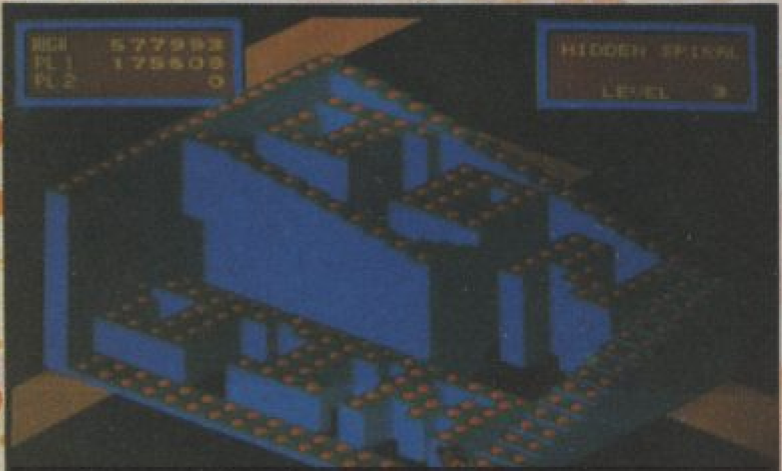
The graphics are crisp, clear and very colourful and use a yummy colour scheme of red, green, blue and yellow.

This must rate as one of the best conversions of an arcade game to a home micro. Atari should be making announcements in the near future as to the availability of this and its other arcade conversion on the ST. *Xtron* is the other game this month and it is the first game to use the one megabyte 1040 St machine. It is basically a left-right shoot-'em-up but with real class.

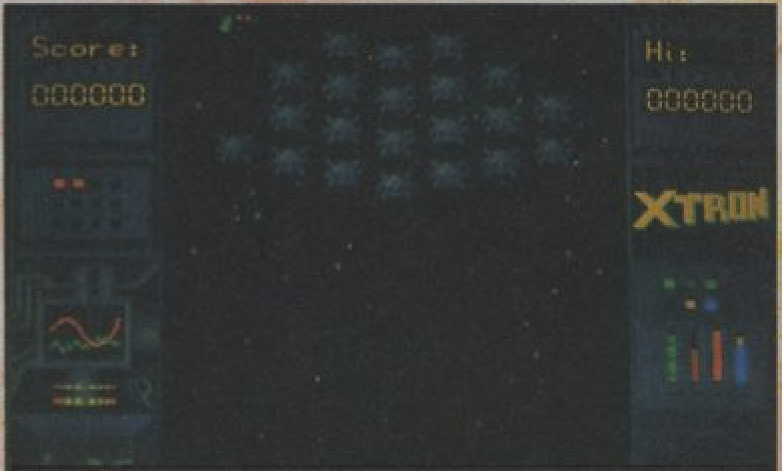
You have 12 lives and countless levels to work through, the presentation is really ace with beautifully defined aliens and haunting sound effects.

The aliens whirl and twirl around you and this is not for the faint hearted!

The two programmers Singh and Wagner recently completed their latest game *Typhoon* which takes the concept of this game a stage further. Do not miss it!



► Crystal Castles



► Xtron

I was recently strolling around the Virgin Games Centre in central London listening to young and old alike deciding on what games they wanted to buy.

It really did shock me to hear the vast majority of people look at and then walk away from the full price software. They complained about the price, or said they didn't have enough money to buy the game.

One of the most painful aspects of being a reviewer is getting free software. Having been on the receiving end of thousands of freebie games I have lost touch with the reality of software prices.

It has to be said that the market has and is continuing to develop its pricing structure. I was a fervent anti-budget man (until recently when I sold my own game to Mastertronic) thinking budget was degrading and below my dignity.

Budget is here to stay and it performs an essential task, it bridges that huge gap in price from two pounds to ten pounds. Make no mistake budget is an integral part of the market and the general quality is good going on excellent.

The market is currently straddled with three pricing points — £1.99, £2.99, £8-9 full price and ten pounds for compilations.

There are two new price points soon to be attempted, £4.99 and the £1 game. These are really tearing away the foundations which divide budget and full price games. £1 undermines the £2-3 area and £4.99 undermines the £8-9 price tag.

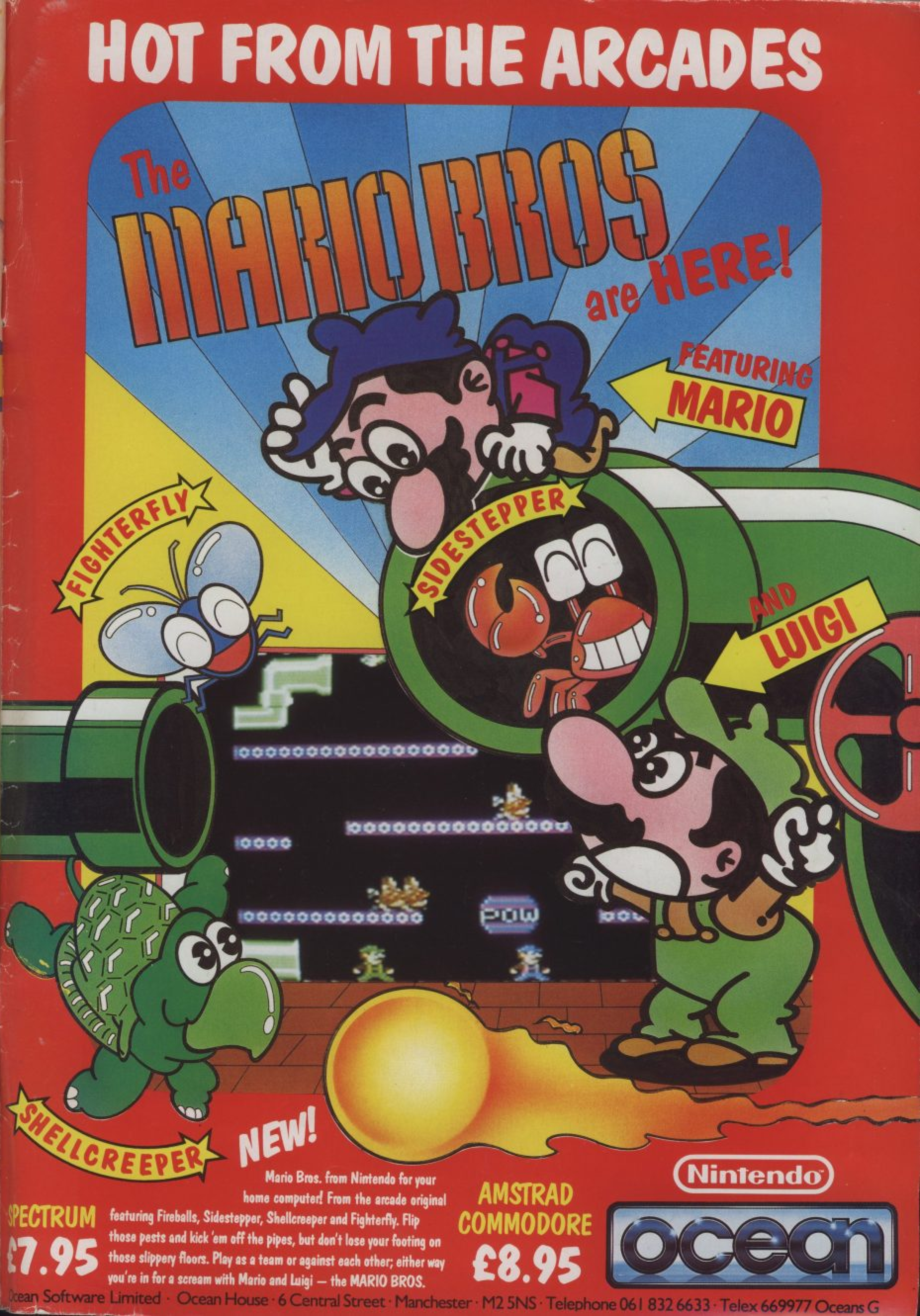
I cannot see these two price points working, the profit margin for shops will become blurred and just where do you draw the quality line for a £1,2,3 game or a £5,8,10 game.

Basically it is playing silly buggers with the market. Can we please have some sanity and sensible pricing in the market software houses?

As for all you joystick wagglers out there, what do you buy with your pennies?

Drop me a line telling me what you think are the best buys or whether you think games are too expensive.

Tony Takoushi


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